This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

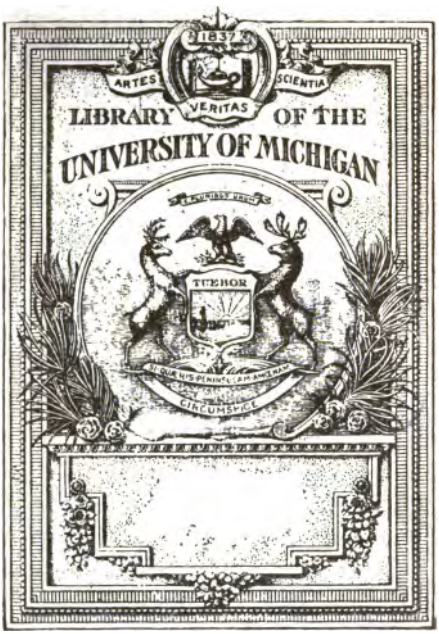
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



THE GIFT OF
W. W. Beman

THE

MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO,

A

ROMANCE;

INTERSPERSED WITH SOME PIECES OF POETRY.

BY

Mrs. ANN RADCLIFFE,

AUTHOR OF THE ROMANCE OF THE FOREST, ETC.

THE THIRD EDITION.
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Fate sits on these dark battlements, and frowns,
And, as the portals open to receive me,
Her voice, in sullen echoes through the courts,
Tells of a nameless deed.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR G. G. AND J. ROBINSON,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1795.

W. W. Beman
gf.
5-23-1923
4 vols

THE

MYSTERIES

OF

UDOLPHO.

CHAP. I.

"..... home is the reſort
Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
Supporting and ſupported, poliſh'd friends
And dear relations mingle into bliſs."

THOMSON.

ON the pleaſant banks of the Garonne, in the province of Gaſcony, ſtood, in the year 1584, the chateau of Monſieur St. Aubert. From its windows were ſeen the paſtoral landſcapes of Guienne and Gaſcony ſtretching along the river, gay with luxuriant woods and vines, and plantations of olives. To the ſouth, the view was bounded by the majeſtic Pyrenées, whoſe ſummits, veiled in clouds, or

425506

exhibiting awful forms, ſeen, andloſt again, as the partial vapours rolled along, were ſometimes barren, and gleamed through the blue tinge of air, and ſometimes frowned with foreſts of gloomy pine, that ſwept downward to their baſe. Theſe tremendous precipices were contraſted by the ſoft green of the paſtures and woods that hung upon their ſkirts; among whoſe flocks, and herds, and ſimple cottages, the eye, after having ſcaled the cliffs above, delighted to repoſe. To the north, and to the eaſt, the plains of Guienne and Languedoc were loſt in the miſt of diſtance; on the weſt, Gaſcony was bounded by the waters of Biſcay.

M. St. Aubert loved to wander, with his wife and daughter, on the margin of the Garonne, and to liſten to the muſic that floated on its waves. He had known life in other forms than thoſe of paſtoral ſimplicity, having mingled in the gay and in the buſy ſcenes of the world; but the

the flattering portrait of mankind, which his heart had delineated in early youth, his experience had too ſorrowfully corrected. Yet, amidſt the changing viſions of life, his principles remained unſhaken, his benevolence unchilled; and he retired from the multitude "more in *pity* than in anger," to ſcenes of ſimple nature, to the pure delights of literature, and to the exerciſe of domeſtic virtues.

He was a deſcendant from the younger branch of an illuſtrious family, and it was deſigned, that the deficiency of his patrimonial wealth ſhould be ſupplied either by a ſplendid alliance in marriage, or by ſucceſs in the intrigues of public affairs. But St. Aubert had too nice a ſenſe of honour to fulfil the latter hope, and too ſmall a portion of ambition to ſacrifice what he called happineſs, to the attainment of wealth. After the death of his father he married a very amiable woman, his equal in birth, and not his ſuperior in fortune. The late Monſieur

St. Aubert's liberality, or extravagance, had ſo much involved his affairs, that his ſon found it neceſſary to diſpoſe of a part of the family domain, and, ſome years after his marriage, he ſold it to Monſieur Queſnel, the brother of his wife, and retired to a ſmall eſtate in Gaſcony, where conjugal felicity, and parental duties, divided his attention with the treaſures of knowledge and the illuminations of genius.

To this ſpot he had been attached from his infancy. He had often made excurſions to it when a boy, and the impreſſions of delight given to his mind by the homely kindneſs of the grey-headed peaſant, to whom it was intruſted, and whoſe fruit and cream never failed, had not been obliterated by ſucceeding circumſtances. The green paſtures along which he had ſo often bounded in the exultation of health, and youthful freedom—the woods, under whoſe refreſhing ſhade he had firſt indulged that penſive melan-

melancholy, which afterwards made a ſtrong feature of his character—the wild walks of the mountains, the river, on whoſe waves he had floated, and the diſtant plains, which ſeemed boundleſs as his early hopes—were never after remembered by St. Aubert but with enthuſiaſm and regret. At length he diſengaged himſelf from the world, and retired hither, to realize the wiſhes of many years.

The building, as it then ſtood, was merely a ſummer cottage, rendered intereſting to a ſtranger by its neat ſimplicity, or the beauty of the ſurrounding ſcene; and conſiderable additions were neceſſary to make it a comfortable family reſidence. St. Aubert felt a kind of affection for every part of the fabric, which he remembered in his youth, and would not ſuffer a ſtone of it to be removed; ſo that the new building, adapted to the ſtyle of the old one, formed with it only a ſimple and elegant reſi-

dence. The taſte of Madame St. Aubert was conſpicuous in its internal finiſhing, where the ſame chaſte ſimplicity was obſervable in the furniture, and in the few ornaments of the apartments, that characteriſed the manners of its inhabitants.

The library occupied the weſt ſide of the chateau, and was enriched by a collection of the beſt books in the ancient and modern languages. This room opened upon a grove, which ſtood on the brow of a gentle declivity, that fell towards the river, and the tall trees gave it a melancholy and pleaſing ſhade; while from the windows the eye caught, beneath the ſpreading branches, the gay and luxuriant landſcape ſtretching to the weſt, and overlooked on the left by the bold precipices of the Pyrenées. Adjoining the library was a green-houſe, ſtored with ſcarce and beautiful plants; for one of the amuſements of St. Aubert was the ſtudy of botany; and among the neighbouring

bouring mountains, which afforded a luxurious feaſt to the mind of the naturaliſt, he often paſſed the day in the purſuits of his favourite ſcience. He was ſometimes accompanied in theſe little excurſions by Madame St. Aubert, and frequently by his daughter; when, with a ſmall oſier baſket to receive plants, and another filled with cold refreſhments, ſuch as the cabin of the ſhepherd did not afford, they wandered away among the moſt romantic and magnificent ſcenes, nor ſuffered the charms of Nature's lowly children to abſtract them from the obſervance of her ſtupendous works. When weary of ſauntering among cliffs that ſeemed ſcarcely acceſſible but to the ſteps of the enthuſiaſt, and where no track appeared on the vegetation, but what the foot of the izard had left; they would ſeek one of thoſe green receſſes, which ſo beautifully adorn the boſom of theſe mountains, where, under the ſhade of the lofty larch, or cedar, they enjoyed

their ſimple repaſt, made ſweeter by the waters of the cool ſtream, that crept along the turf, and by the breath of wild flowers and aromatic plants, that fringed the rocks, and inlaid the graſs.

Adjoining the eaſtern ſide of the greenhouſe, looking towards the plains of Languedoc, was a room, which Emily called hers, and which contained her books, her drawings, her muſical inſtruments, with ſome favourite birds and plants. Here ſhe uſually exerciſed herſelf in elegant arts, cultivated only becauſe they were congenial to her taſte, and in which native genius, aſſiſted by the inſtructions of Monſieur and Madame St. Aubert, made her an early proficient. The windows of this room were particularly pleaſant; they deſcended to the floor, and, opening upon the little lawn that ſurrounded the houſe, the eye was led between groves of almond, palm-trees, flowering aſh, and myrtle, to the diſtant landſcape, where the Garonne wandered.

The

The peaſants of this gay climate were often ſeen on an evening, when the day's labour was done, dancing in groups on the margin of the river. Their ſprightly melodies, *debonnaire* ſteps, the fanciful figure of their dances, with the taſteful and capricious manner in which the girls adjuſted their ſimple dreſs, gave a character to the ſcene entirely French.

The front of the chateau, which, having a ſouthern aſpect, opened upon the grandeur of the mountains, was occupied on the ground floor by a ruſtic hall, and two excellent ſitting rooms. The firſt floor, for the cottage had no ſecond ſtory, was laid out in bed-chambers, except one apartment that opened to a balcony, and which was generally uſed for a breakfaſt-room.

In the ſurrounding ground, St. Aubert had made very taſteful improvements; yet, ſuch was his attachment to objects he had remembered from his boyiſh days, that he had in ſome inſtances ſacrificed taſte to ſentiment. There were

two old larches that ſhaded the building, and interrupted the proſpect: St. Aubert had ſometimes declared that he believed he ſhould have been weak enough to have wept at their fall. In addition to theſe larches he planted a little grove of beech, pine, and mountain-aſh. On a lofty terrace, formed by the ſwelling bank of the river, roſe a plantation of orange, lemon and palm-trees, whoſe fruit, in the coolneſs of evening, breathed delicious fragrance. With theſe were mingled a few trees of other ſpecies. Here, under the ample ſhade of a plane-tree, that ſpread its majeſtic canopy towards the river, St. Aubert loved to ſit in the fine evenings of ſummer, with his wife and children, watching, beneath its foliage, the ſetting-ſun, the mild ſplendour of its light fading from the diſtant landſcape, till the ſhadows of twilight melted its various features into one tint of ſober gray. Here, too, he loved to read, and to converſe with Madame St. Aubert; or to play

with his children, reſigning himſelf to the influence of thoſe ſweet affections, which are ever attendant on ſimplicity and nature. He has often ſaid, while tears of pleaſure trembled in his eyes, that theſe were moments infinitely more delightful than any paſſed amid the brilliant and tumultuous ſcenes that are courted by the world. His heart was occupied; it had, what can be ſo rarely ſaid, no wiſh for a happineſs beyond what it experienced. The conſciouſneſs of acting right diffuſed a ſerenity over his manners, which nothing elſe could impart to a man of moral perceptions like his, and which refined his ſenſe of every ſurrounding bleſſing.

The deepeſt ſhade of twilight did not ſend him from his favourite plane-tree. He loved the ſoothing hour, when the laſt tints of light die away; when the ſtars, one by one, tremble through æther, and are reflected on the dark mirror of the waters; that hour, which, of all others, inſpires the mind with penſive ten-

derneſs, and often elevates it to ſublime contemplation. When the moon ſhed her ſoft rays among the foliage, he ſtill lingered, and his paſtoral ſupper of cream and fruits was often ſpread beneath it. Then, on the ſtillneſs of night, came the ſong of the nightingale, breathing ſweetneſs, and awakening melancholy.

The firſt interruptions to the happineſs he had known ſince his retirement, were occaſioned by the death of his two ſons. He loſt them at that age when infantine ſimplicity is ſo faſcinating; and though, in conſideration of Madame St. Aubert's diſtreſs, he reſtrained the expreſſion of his own, and endeavoured to bear it, as he meant, with philoſophy, he had, in truth, no philoſophy that could render him calm to ſuch loſſes. One daughter was now his only ſurviving child; and, while he watched the unfolding of her infant character, with anxious fondneſs, he endeavoured, with unremitting effort, to counteract thoſe traits in her diſpoſition, which might

hereafter

hereafter lead her from happineſs. She had diſcovered in her early years uncommon delicacy of mind, warm affections, and ready benevolence; but with theſe was obſervable a degree of ſuſceptibility too exquiſite to admit of laſting peace. As ſhe advanced in youth, this ſenſibility gave a penſive tone to her ſpirits, and a ſoftneſs to her manner, which added grace to beauty, and rendered her a very intereſting object to perſons of a congenial diſpoſition. But St. Aubert had too much good ſenſe to prefer a charm to a virtue; and had penetration enough to ſee, that this charm was too dangerous to its poſſeſſor to be allowed the character of a bleſſing. He endeavoured, therefore, to ſtrengthen her mind; to enure her to habits of ſelf-command; to teach her to reject the firſt impulſe of her feelings, and to look, with cool examination, upon the diſappointments he ſometimes threw in her way. While he inſtructed her to reſiſt

ſiſt firſt impreſſions, and to acquire that ſteady dignity of mind, that can alone counterbalance the paſſions, and bear us, as far as is compatible with our nature, above the reach of circumſtances, he taught himſelf a leſſon of fortitude; for he was often obliged to witneſs, with ſeeming indifference, the tears and ſtruggles which his caution occaſioned her.

In perſon, Emily reſembled her mother; having the ſame elegant ſymmetry of form, the ſame delicacy of features, and the ſame blue eyes, full of tender ſweetneſs. But, lovely as was her perſon, it was the varied expreſſion of her countenance, as converſation awakened the nicer emotions of her mind, that threw ſuch a captivating grace around her:

"Thoſe tend'rer tints, that ſhun the careleſs eye,
And, in the world's contagious circle, die."

St. Aubert cultivated her underſtanding with the moſt ſcrupulous care. He gave

gave her a general view of the ſciences, and an exact acquaintance with every part of elegant literature. He taught her Latin and Engliſh, chiefly that ſhe might underſtand the ſublimity of their beſt poets. She diſcovered in her early years a taſte for works of genius; and it was St. Aubert's principle, as well as his inclination, to promote every innocent means of happineſs. "A well-informed mind," he would ſay, "is the beſt ſecurity againſt the contagion of folly and of vice. The vacant mind is ever on the watch for relief, and ready to plunge into error, to eſcape from the languor of idleneſs. Store it with ideas, teach it the pleaſure of thinking; and the temptations of the world without, will be counteracted by the gratifications derived from the world within. Thought, and cultivation, are neceſſary equally to the happineſs of a country and a city life; in the firſt they prevent the uneaſy ſenſations of indolence, and afford a ſublime pleaſure

pleaſure in the taſte they create for the beautiful, and the grand; in the latter, they make diſſipation leſs an object of neceſſity, and conſequently of intereſt.

It was one of Emily's earlieſt pleaſures to ramble among the ſcenes of nature; nor was it in the ſoft and glowing landſcape that ſhe moſt delighted; ſhe loved more the wild wood walks, that ſkirted the mountain; and ſtill more the mountain's ſtupendous receſſes, where the ſilence and grandeur of ſolitude impreſſed a ſacred awe upon her heart, and lifted her thoughts to the GOD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH. In ſcenes like theſe ſhe would often linger alone, wrapt in a melancholy charm, till the laſt gleam of day faded from the weſt; till the lonely ſound of a ſheep-bell, or the diſtant bark of a watch-dog, were all that broke on the ſtillneſs of the evening. Then, the gloom of the woods; the trembling of their leaves, at intervals, in the breeze; the bat, flitting on the twilight; the cottage-lights,

now

now ſeen, and now loſt—were circumſtances that awakened her mind into effort, and led to enthuſiaſm and poetry.

Her favourite walk was to a little fiſhing-houſe, belonging to St. Aubert, in a woody glen, on the margin of a rivulet that deſcended from the Pyrenées, and, after foaming among their rocks, wound its ſilent way beneath the ſhades it reflected. Above the woods, that ſcreened this glen, roſe the lofty ſummits of the Pyrenées, which often burſt boldly on the eye, through the glades below. Sometimes the ſhattered face of a rock only was ſeen, crowned with wild ſhrubs; or a ſhepherd's cabin ſeated on a cliff, overſhadowed by dark cypreſs, or waving aſh. Emerging from the deep receſſes of the woods, the glade opened to the diſtant landſcape, where the rich paſtures and vine-covered ſlopes of Gaſcony gradually declined to the plains; and there, on the winding ſhores of the Garonne, groves, and hamlets, and villas,—their outlines

ſoftened

ſoftened by diſtance, melted from the eye into one rich harmonious tint.

This, too, was the favourite retreat of St. Aubert, to which he frequently withdrew from the fervour of noon, with his wife, his daughter, and his books; or came at the ſweet evening hour to welcome the ſilent duſk, or to liſten for the muſic of the nightingale. Sometimes, too, he brought muſic of his own, and awakened every fairy echo with the tender accents of his oboe; and often have the tones of Emily's voice drawn ſweetneſs from the waves, over which they trembled.

It was in one of her excurſions to this ſpot, that ſhe obſerved the following lines written with a pencil on a part of the wainſcot:

SONNET.

Go, pencil! faithful to thy maſter's ſighs!
Go—tell the Goddeſs of this fairy ſcene,
When next her light ſteps wind theſe wood-walks green,
Whence all his tears, his tender ſorrows, riſe:

Ah!

Ah! paint her form, her ſoul-illumin'd eyes,
The ſweet expreſſion of her penſive face,
The light'ning ſmile, the animated grace—
The portrait well the lover's voice ſupplies;
Speaks all his heart muſt feel, his tongue would ſay:
Yet ah! not all his heart muſt ſadly feel!
How oft the flow'ret's ſilken leaves conceal
The drug that ſteals the vital ſpark away!
And who that gazes on that angel-ſmile,
Would fear its charm, or think it could beguile!

Theſe lines were not inſcribed to any perſon; Emily therefore could not apply them to herſelf, though ſhe was undoubtedly the nymph of theſe ſhades. Having glanced round the little circle of her acquaintance without being detained by a ſuſpicion as to whom they could be addreſſed, ſhe was compelled to reſt in uncertainty; an uncertainty which would have been more painful to an idle mind than it was to hers. She had no leiſure to ſuffer this circumſtance, trifling at firſt, to ſwell into importance by frequent remembrance.

membrance. The little vanity it had excited (for the incertitude which forbade her to preſume upon having inſpired the ſonnet, forbade her alſo to diſbelieve it) paſſed away, and the incident was diſmiſſed from her thoughts amid her books, her ſtudies, and the exerciſe of ſocial charities.

Soon after this period, her anxiety was awakened by the indiſpoſition of her father, who was attacked with a fever; which, though not thought to be of a dangerous kind, gave a ſevere ſhock to his conſtitution. Madame St. Aubert and Emily attended him with unremitting care; but his recovery was very ſlow, and, as he advanced towards health, Madame ſeemed to decline.

The firſt ſcene he viſited, after he was well enough to take the air, was his favourite fiſhing-houſe. A baſket of proviſions was ſent thither, with books, and Emily's lute; for fiſhing-tackle he had no uſe, for he never could find amuſement in torturing or deſtroying.

After

After employing himſelf, for about an hour, in botanizing, dinner was ſerved. It was a repaſt, to which gratitude, for being again permitted to viſit this ſpot, gave ſweetneſs; and family happineſs once more ſmiled beneath theſe ſhades. Monſieur St. Aubert converſed with unuſual cheerfulneſs; every object delighted his ſenſes. The refreſhing pleaſure from the firſt view of nature, after the pain of illneſs, and the confinement of a ſick-chamber, is above the conceptions, as well as the deſcriptions, of thoſe in health. The green woods and paſtures; the flowery turf; the blue concave of the heavens; the balmy air; the murmur of the limpid ſtream; and even the hum of every little inſect of the ſhade, ſeem to revivify the ſoul, and make mere exiſtence bliſs.

Madame St. Aubert, reanimated by the cheerfulneſs and recovery of her huſband, was no longer ſenſible of the indiſpoſition which had lately oppreſſed her; and, as ſhe ſauntered along the wood-

wood-walks of this romantic glen, and converſed with him, and with her daughter, ſhe often looked at them alternately with a degree of tenderneſs, that filled her eyes with tears. St. Aubert obſerved this more than once, and gently reproved her for the emotion; but ſhe could only ſmile, claſp his hand, and that of Emily, and weep the more. He felt the tender enthuſiaſm ſtealing upon himſelf in a degree that became almoſt painful; his features aſſumed a ſerious air, and he could not forbear ſecretly ſighing—"Perhaps I ſhall ſome time look back to theſe moments, as to the ſummit of my happineſs, with hopeleſs regret. But let me not miſuſe them by uſeleſs anticipation; let me hope I ſhall not live to mourn the loſs of thoſe who are dearer to me than life."

To relieve, or perhaps to indulge, the penſive temper of his mind, he bade Emily fetch the lute ſhe knew how to touch with ſuch ſweet pathos. As ſhe drew near the

fiſhing-houſe, ſhe was ſurpriſed to hear the tones of the inſtrument, which were awakened by the hand of taſte, and uttered a plaintive air, whoſe exquiſite melody engaged all her attention. She liſtened in profound ſilence, afraid to move from the ſpot, leſt the ſound of her ſteps ſhould occaſion her to loſe a note of the muſic, or ſhould diſturb the muſician. Every thing without the building was ſtill, and no perſon appeared. She continued to liſten, till timidity ſucceeded to ſurpriſe and delight; a timidity, increaſed by a remembrance of the pencilled lines ſhe had formerly ſeen, and ſhe heſitated whether to proceed, or to return.

While ſhe pauſed, the muſic ceaſed; and, after a momentary heſitation, ſhe recollected courage to advance to the fiſhing-houſe, which ſhe entered with faltering ſteps, and found unoccupied! Her lute lay on the table; every thing ſeemed undiſturbed, and ſhe began to believe it was another inſtrument ſhe had heard, till ſhe remem-

remembered, that, when ſhe followed M. and Madame St. Aubert from this ſpot, her lute was left on a window ſeat. She felt alarmed, yet knew not wherefore; the melancholy gloom of evening, and the profound ſtillneſs of the place, interrupted only by the light trembling of leaves, heightened her fanciful apprehenſions, and ſhe was deſirous of quitting the building, but perceived herſelf grow faint, and ſat down. As ſhe tried to recover herſelf, the pencilled lines on the wainſcot met her eye; ſhe ſtarted, as if ſhe had ſeen a ſtranger; but, endeavouring to conquer the tremour of her ſpirits, roſe, and went to the window. To the lines before noticed ſhe now perceived that others were added, in which her name appeared.

Though no longer ſuffered to doubt that they were addreſſed to herſelf, ſhe was as ignorant, as before, by whom they could be written. While ſhe muſed, ſhe thought ſhe heard the ſound of a

ſtep

ſtep without the building, and again alarmed, ſhe caught up her lute, and hurried away. Monſieur and Madame St. Aubert ſhe found in a little path that wound along the ſides of the glen.

Having reached a green ſummit, ſhadowed by palm-trees, and overlooking the vallies and plains of Gaſcony, they ſeated themſelves on the turf; and while their eyes wandered over the glorious ſcene, and they inhaled the ſweet breath of flowers and herbs that enriched the graſs, Emily played and ſung ſeveral of their favourite airs, with the delicacy of expreſſion in which ſhe ſo much excelled.

Muſic and converſation detained them in this enchanting ſpot, till the ſun's laſt light ſlept upon the plains; till the white ſails that glided beneath the mountains, where the Garonne wandered, became dim, and the gloom of evening ſtole over the landſcape. It was a melancholy, but not unpleaſing gloom. St. Aubert and his family roſe, and left the place with

regret; alas! Madame St. Aubert knew not that ſhe left it for ever.

When they reached the fiſhing-houſe ſhe miſſed her bracelet, and recollected that ſhe had taken it from her arm after dinner, and had left it on the table when ſhe went to walk. After a long ſearch, in which Emily was very active, ſhe was compelled to reſign herſelf to the loſs of it. What made this bracelet valuable to her, was a miniature of her daughter to which it was attached, eſteemed a ſtriking reſemblance, and which had been painted only a few months before. When Emily was convinced that the bracelet was really gone, ſhe bluſhed, and became thoughtful. That ſome ſtranger had been in the fiſhing-houſe, during her abſence, her lute, and the additional lines of a pencil, had already informed her: from the purport of theſe lines it was not unreaſonable to believe, that the poet, the muſician, and the thief were the ſame perſon. But though the muſic ſhe had heard,

the

the written lines ſhe had ſeen, and the diſappearance of the picture, formed a combination of circumſtances very remarkable, ſhe was irreſiſtibly reſtrained from mentioning them; ſecretly determining, however, never again to viſit the fiſhing-houſe without Monſieur or Madame St. Aubert.

They returned penſively to the chateau, Emily muſing on the incident which had juſt occurred; St. Aubert reflecting, with placid gratitude, on the bleſſings he poſſeſſed; and Madame St. Aubert ſomewhat diſturbed and perplexed by the loſs of her daughter's picture. As they drew near the houſe, they obſerved an unuſual buſtle about it; the ſound of voices was diſtinctly heard, ſervants and horſes were ſeen paſſing between the trees, and, at length, the wheels of a carriage rolled along. Having come within view of the front of the chateau, a landau, with ſmoking horſes, appeared on the little lawn before it. St. Aubert perceived the liveries of his brother-in-law, and in the parlour

he found Monſieur and Madame Queſnel already entered. They had left Paris ſome days before, and were on the way to their eſtate, only ten leagues diſtant from La Vallée, and which Monſieur Queſnel had purchaſed ſeveral years before of St. Aubert. This gentleman was the only brother of Madame St. Aubert; but the ties of relationſhip having never been ſtrengthened by congeniality of character, the intercourſe between them had not been frequent. M. Queſnel had lived altogether in the world; his aim had been conſequence; ſplendour was the object of his taſte; and his addreſs and knowledge of character had carried him forward to the attainment of almoſt all that he had courted. By a man of ſuch a diſpoſition, it is not ſurpriſing that the virtues of St. Aubert ſhould be overlooked; or that his pure taſte, ſimplicity, and moderated wiſhes, were conſidered as marks of a weak intellect, and of confined views. The marriage of his ſiſter with St.

St. Aubert had been mortifying to his ambition, for he had deſigned that the matrimonial connection ſhe formed ſhould aſſiſt him to attain the conſequence which he ſo much deſired; and ſome offers were made her by perſons whoſe rank and fortune flattered his warmeſt hope. But his ſiſter, who was then addreſſed alſo by St. Aubert, perceived, or thought ſhe perceived, that happineſs and ſplendour were not the ſame, and ſhe did not heſitate to forego the laſt for the attainment of the former. Whether Monſieur Queſnel thought them the ſame, or not, he would readily have ſacrificed his ſiſter's peace to the gratification of his own ambition; and, on her marriage with St. Aubert, expreſſed in private his contempt of her ſpiritleſs conduct, and of the connection which it permitted. Madame St. Aubert, though ſhe concealed this inſult from her huſband, felt, perhaps, for the firſt time, reſentment lighted in her heart; and, though a re-

gard for her own dignity, united with conſiderations of prudence, reſtrained her expreſſion of this reſentment, there was ever after a mild reſerve in her manner towards M. Queſnel, which he both underſtood and felt.

In his own marriage he did not follow his ſiſter's example. His lady was an Italian, and an heireſs by birth; and, by nature and education, was a vain and frivolous woman.

They now determined to paſs the night with St. Aubert; and as the chateau was not large enough to accommodate their ſervants, the latter were diſmiſſed to the neighbouring village When the firſt compliments were over, and the arrangements for the night made, M. Queſnel began the diſplay of his intelligence and connections; while St. Aubert, who had been long enough in retirement to find theſe topics recommended by their novelty, liſtened, with a degree of patience and attention, which his gueſt miſtook for

for the humility of wonder. The latter, indeed, deſcribed the few feſtivities which the turbulence of that period permitted to the court of Henry the Third, with a minuteneſs, that ſomewhat recompenſed for his oſtentation; but when he came to ſpeak of the character of the Duke de Joyeuſe, of a ſecret treaty, which he knew to be negotiating with the Porte, and of the light in which Henry of Navarre was received, M. St. Aubert recollected enough of his former experience to be aſſured, that his gueſt could be only of an inferior claſs of politicians; and that, from the importance of the ſubjects upon which he committed himſelf, he could not be of the rank to which he pretended to belong. The opinions delivered by M. Queſnel, were ſuch as St. Aubert forbore to reply to, for he knew that his gueſt had neither humanity to feel, nor diſcernment to perceive, what is juſt.

Madame Queſnel, meanwhile, was ex-

 preſſing

preſſing to Madame St. Aubert her aſtoniſhment, that ſhe could bear to paſs her life in this remote corner of the world, as ſhe called it, and deſcribing, from a wiſh, probably, of exciting envy, the ſplendour of the balls, banquets, and proceſſions which had juſt been given by the court, in honour of the nuptials of the Duke de Joyeuſe with Margaretta of Lorrain, the ſiſter of the Queen. She deſcribed with equal minuteneſs the magnificence ſhe had ſeen, and that from which ſhe had been excluded; while Emily's vivid fancy, as ſhe liſtened with ardent curioſity of youth, heightened the ſcenes ſhe heard of; and Madame St. Aubert, looking on her family, felt, as a tear ſtole to her eye, that though ſplendour may grace happineſs, virtue only can beſtow it.

"It is now twelve years, St. Aubert," ſaid M. Queſnel, "ſince I purchaſed your family eſtate."—"Somewhere thereabout," replied St. Aubert, ſuppreſſing a ſigh. "It is near five years ſince I have been there," reſumed

reſumed Queſnel; " for Paris and its neighbourhood is the only place in the world to live in, and I am ſo immerſed in politics, and have ſo many affairs of moment on my hands, that I find it difficult to ſteal away even for a month or two." St. Aubert remaining ſilent, M. Queſnel proceeded: " I have ſometimes wondered how you, who have lived in the capital, and have been accuſtomed to company, can exiſt elſewhere;—eſpecially in ſo remote a country as this, where you can neither hear nor ſee any thing, and can in ſhort be ſcarcely conſcious of life."

" I live for my family and myſelf," ſaid St. Aubert; " I am now contented to know only happineſs;—formerly I knew life."

" I mean to expend thirty or forty thouſand livres on improvements," ſaid M. Queſnel, without ſeeming to notice the words of St. Aubert; " for I deſign, next ſummer, to bring here my friends, the Duke de Durefort and the Marquis Ramont, to paſs a month or two with me."

To St. Aubert's enquiry, as to theſe intended improvements, he replied that he ſhould take down the old eaſt wing of the chateau, and raiſe upon the ſite a ſet of ſtables. "Then I ſhall build," ſaid he, "a *ſalle à manger*, a *ſalon*, a *ſalle au commune*, and a number of rooms for ſervants; for at preſent there is not accommodation for a third part of my own people."

"It accommodated our father's houſehold," ſaid St. Aubert, grieved that the old manſion was to be thus improved, "and that was not a ſmall one."

"Our notions are ſomewhat enlarged ſince thoſe days," ſaid M. Queſnel;—"what was then thought a decent ſtyle of living would not now be endured." Even the calm St. Aubert bluſhed at theſe words, but his anger ſoon yielded to contempt. "The ground about the chateau is encumbered with trees; I mean to cut ſome of them down."

"Cut

"Cut down the trees too!" ſaid St. Aubert.

"Certainly. Why ſhould I not? they interrupt my proſpects. There is a cheſnut which ſpreads its branches before the whole ſouth ſide of the chateau, and which is ſo ancient that they tell me the hollow of its trunk will hold a dozen men. Your enthuſiaſm will ſcarcely contend that there can be either uſe, or beauty, in ſuch a ſapleſs old tree as this."

"Good God!" exclaimed St. Aubert, "you ſurely will not deſtroy that noble cheſnut, which has flouriſhed for centuries, the glory of the eſtate! It was in its maturity when the preſent manſion was built. How often, in my youth, I have climbed among its broad branches, and ſat embowered amidſt a world of leaves, while the heavy ſhower has pattered above, and not a rain drop reached me! How often I have ſat with my book in my hand, ſometimes reading, and ſometimes look-

ing out between the branches upon the wide landſcape, and the ſetting ſun, till twilight came, and brought the birds home to their little neſts among the leaves! How often—but pardon me," added St. Aubert, recollecting that he was ſpeaking to a man who could neither comprehend, nor allow for his feelings, "I am talking of times and feelings as old-faſhioned as the taſte that would ſpare that venerable tree."

"It will certainly come down," ſaid M. Queſnel; "I believe I ſhall plant ſome Lombardy poplars among the clumps of cheſnut, that I ſhall leave of the avenue; Madame Queſnel is partial to the poplar, and tells me how much it adorns a villa of her uncle, not far from Venice."

"On the banks of the Brenta, indeed," continued St. Aubert, "where its ſpiry form is intermingled with the pine and the cypreſs, and where it plays over light and elegant porticoes and colonnades, it unqueſtionably adorns the ſcene; but among

among the giants of the foreſt, and near a heavy gothic manſion—"

"Well, my good ſir," ſaid M. Queſnel, "I will not diſpute with you. You muſt return to Paris before our ideas can at all agree. But *à propos* of Venice; I have ſome thoughts of going thither, next ſummer; events may call me to take poſſeſſion of that ſame villa, too, which they tell me is the moſt charming that can be imagined: In that caſe I ſhall leave the improvements I mention to another year, and I may, perhaps, be tempted to ſtay ſome time in Italy."

Emily was ſomewhat ſurpriſed to hear him talk of being tempted to remain abroad, after he had mentioned his preſence to be ſo neceſſary at Paris, that it was with difficulty he could ſteal away for a month or two; but St. Aubert underſtood the ſelf-importance of the man too well to wonder at this trait; and the poſſibility, that theſe projected improvements might be deferred, gave him a hope that they might never take place.

Before

Before they ſeparated for the night, M. Queſnel deſired to ſpeak with St. Aubert alone, and they retired to another room, where they remained a conſiderable time. The ſubject of this converſation was not known; but, whatever it might be, St. Aubert, when he returned to the ſupper-room, ſeemed much diſturbed, and a ſhade of ſorrow ſometimes fell upon his features, that alarmed Madame St. Aubert. When they were alone, ſhe was tempted to enquire the occaſion of it; but the delicacy of mind, which had ever appeared in his conduct, reſtrained her: ſhe conſidered that, if St. Aubert wiſhed her to be acquainted with the ſubject of his concern, he would not wait for her enquiries.

On the following day, before M. Queſnel departed, he had a ſecond conference with St. Aubert.

The gueſts, after dining at the chateau, ſet out in the cool of the day for Epourville, whither they gave him and Madame St. Aubert

Aubert a preſſing invitation, prompted rather by the vanity of diſplaying their ſplendour, than by a wiſh to make their friends happy.

Emily returned, with delight, to the liberty which their preſence had reſtrained, to her books, her walks, and the rational converſation of M. and Madame St. Aubert, who ſeemed to rejoice, no leſs, that they were delivered from the ſhackles which arrogance and frivolity had impoſed.

Madame St. Aubert excuſed herſelf from ſharing their uſual evening walk, complaining that ſhe was not quite well, and St. Aubert and Emily went out together.

They chofe a walk towards the mountains, intending to viſit ſome old penſioners of St. Aubert, which, from his very moderate income, he contrived to ſupport, though it is probable M. Queſnel, with his very large one, could not have afforded this.

After

After diſtributing to his penſioners their weekly ſtipends, liſtening patiently to the complaints of ſome, redreſſing the grievances of others, and ſoftening the diſcontents of all, by the look of ſympathy, and the ſmile of benevolence, St. Aubert returned home through the woods,

. . . . . "where
At fall of eve the fairy-people throng,
In various games and revelry to paſs
The ſummer night, as village ſtories tell*."

"The evening gloom of woods was always delightful to me," ſaid St. Aubert, whoſe mind now experienced the ſweet calm which reſults from the conſciouſneſs of having done a beneficent action, and which diſpoſes it to receive pleaſure from every ſurrounding object. "I remember that in my youth this gloom uſed to call forth to my fancy a thouſand fairy viſions and romantic images; and, I own, I am not yet wholly inſenſible of that high enthu-

* THOMSON

ſiaſm,

ſiaſm, which wakes the poet's dream. I can linger, with ſolemn ſteps, under the deep ſhades, ſend forward a transforming eye into the diſtant obſcurity, and liſten with thrilling delight to the myſtic murmuring of the woods."

"O my dear father," ſaid Emily, while a ſudden tear ſtarted to her eye, "how exactly you deſcribe what I have felt ſo often, and which I thought nobody had ever felt but myſelf! But hark! here comes the ſweeping ſound over the wood-tops;—now it dies away;—how ſolemn the ſtillneſs that ſucceeds! Now the breeze ſwells again. It is like the voice of ſome ſupernatural being—the voice of the ſpirit of the woods, that watches over them by night. Ah! what light is yonder? But it is gone. And now it gleams again, near the root of that large cheſnut: look, ſir!"

"Are you ſuch an admirer of nature," ſaid St. Aubert, "and ſo little acquainted with her appearances, as not to know that

for

for the glow-worm? But come," added he gaily, "ſtep a little further, and we ſhall ſee fairies, perhaps; they are often companions. The glow-worm lends his light, and they in return charm him with muſic, and the dance. Do you ſee nothing tripping yonder?"

Emily laughed. "Well, my dear ſir," ſaid ſhe, "ſince you allow of this alliance, I may venture to own I have anticipated you; and almoſt dare venture to repeat ſome verſes I made one evening in theſe very woods."

"Nay," replied St. Aubert, "diſmiſs the *almoſt*, and venture quite; let us hear what vagaries fancy has been playing in your mind. If ſhe has given you one of her ſpells, you need not envy thoſe of the fairies."

"If it is ſtrong enough to enchant your judgment, ſir," ſaid Emily, "while I diſcloſe her images, I need *not* envy them. The lines go in a ſort of tripping meaſure, which I thought might ſuit the ſubject well

well enough, but I fear they are too irregular.

THE GLOW-WORM.

How pleaſant is the green-wood's deep-matted ſhade
On a mid-ſummer's eve, when the freſh rain is o'er;
When the yellow beams ſlope, and ſparkle thro' the glade,
And ſwiftly in the thin air the light-ſwallows ſoar!

But ſweeter, ſweeter ſtill, when the ſun ſinks to reſt,
And twilight comes on, with the fairies ſo gay
Tripping through the foreſt-walk, where flow'rs, unpreſt,
Bow not their tall heads beneath their frolic play.

To muſic's ſofteſt ſounds they dance away the hour,
Till moon-light ſteals down among the trembling leaves,
And checquers all the ground, and guides them to the bow'r,
The long-haunted bow'r, where the nightingale grieves.

Then no more they dance, till her ſad ſong is done,
But, ſilent as the night, to her mourning attend;
And often as her dying notes their pity have won,
They vow all her ſacred haunts from mortals to defend.

When,

When, down among the mountains, ſinks the ev'n-
ing ſtar,
And the changing moon forſakes this ſhadowy ſphere,
How cheerleſs would they be, tho' they fairies are,
If I, with my pale light, came not near!

Yet cheerleſs tho' they'd be, they're ungrateful to
my love!
For often, when the traveller's benighted on his way,
And I glimmer in his path, and would guide him
thro' the grove,
They bind me in their magic ſpells to lead him far
aſtray;

And in the mire to leave him, till the ſtars are all
burnt out;
While, in ſtrange-looking ſhapes, they friſk about
the ground,
And, afar in the woods, they raiſe a diſmal ſhout,
Till I ſhrink into my cell again for terror of the
ſound!

But, ſee where all the tiny elves come dancing in a
ring,
With the merry, merry pipe, and the tabor, and
the horn,
And the timbrel ſo clear, and the lute with dulcet
ſtring;
Then round about the oak they go till peeping of
the morn.

Down

Down yonder glade two lovers ſteal, to ſhun the fairy queen;
Who frowns upon their plighted vows, and jealous is of me,
That yeſter-eve I lighted them, along the dewy green,
To ſeek the purple flow'r, whoſe juice from all her ſpells can free.

And now, to puniſh me, ſhe keeps afar her jocund band,
With the merry, merry pipe, and the tabor, and the lute;
If I creep near yonder oak ſhe will wave her fairy wand,
And to me the dance will ceaſe, and the muſic all be mute.

O! had I but that purple flow'r whoſe leaves her charms can foil,
And knew like fays to draw the juice, and throw it on the wind,
I'd be her ſlave no longer, nor the traveller beguile,
And help all faithful lovers, nor fear the fairy kind!

But ſoon the *vapour of the woods* will wander afar,
And the fickle moon will fade, and the ſtars diſappear,
Then, cheerleſs will they be, tho' they fairies are,
If I, with my pale light, come not near!

Whatever

Whatever St. Aubert might think of the ſtanzas, he would not deny his daughter the pleaſure of believing that he approved them; and, having given his commendation, he ſunk into a reverie, and they walked on in ſilence.

. . . . A faint erroneous ray,
Glanc'd from th' imperfect ſurfaces of things,
Flung half an image on the ſtraining eye;
While waving woods, and villages, and ſtreams,
And rocks, and mountain-tops, that long retain
The aſcending gleam, are all one ſwimming ſcene,
Uncertain if beheld *."

St. Aubert continued ſilent till he reached the chateau, where his wife had retired to her chamber. The languor and dejection that had lately oppreſſed her, and which the exertion called forth by the arrival of her gueſts had ſuſpended, now returned with increaſed effect. On the following day ſymptoms of fever appeared, and St. Aubert, having ſent for medical advice, learned, that her diſorder was a

* THOMSON.

fever,

fever, of the ſame nature as that from which he had lately recovered. She had, indeed, taken the infection during her attendance upon him, and, her conſtitution being too weak to throw out the diſeaſe immediately, it had lurked in her veins, and occaſioned the heavy languor of which ſhe had complained. St. Aubert, whoſe anxiety for his wife overcame every other conſideration, detained the phyſician in his houſe. He remembered the feelings and the reflections that had called a momentary gloom upon his mind, on the day when he had laſt viſited the fiſhing-houſe, in company with Madame St. Aubert, and he now admitted a preſentiment that this illneſs would be a fatal one. But he effectually concealed this from her, and from his daughter, whom he endeavoured to re-animate with hopes that her conſtant aſſiduities would not be unavailing. The phyſician, when aſked by St. Aubert for his opinion of the diſorder, replied, that the event of it

depended upon circumſtances which he could not aſcertain. Madame St. Aubert ſeemed to have formed a more decided one; but her eyes only gave hints of this. She frequently fixed them upon her anxious friends with an expreſſion of pity, and of tenderneſs, as if ſhe anticipated the ſorrow that awaited them, and that ſeemed to ſay, it was for their ſakes only, for their ſufferings, that ſhe regretted life. On the ſeventh day, the diſorder was at its criſis. The phyſician aſſumed a graver manner, which ſhe obſerved, and took occaſion, when her family had once quitted the chamber, to tell him, that ſhe perceived her death was approaching. "Do not attempt to deceive me," ſaid ſhe, "I feel that I cannot long ſurvive. I am prepared for the event; I have long, I hope, been preparing for it. Since I have not long to live, do not ſuffer a miſtaken compaſſion to induce you to flatter my family with falſe hopes. If you do, their

affliction will only be the heavier when it arrives: I will endeavour to teach them reſignation by my example."

The phyſician was affected; he promiſed to obey her, and told St. Aubert, ſomewhat abruptly, that there was nothing to expect. The latter was not philoſopher enough to reſtrain his feelings when he received this information; but a conſideration of the increaſed affliction which the obſervance of his grief would occaſion his wife, enabled him, after ſome time, to command himſelf in her preſence. Emily was at firſt overwhelmed with the intelligence; then deluded by the ſtrength of her wiſhes, a hope ſprung up in her mind that her mother would yet recover, and to this ſhe pertinaciouſly adhered almoſt to the laſt hour.

The progreſs of this diſorder was marked, on the ſide of Madame St. Aubert, by patient ſuffering, and ſubjected wiſhes. The compoſure, with which ſhe awaited her death, could be derived only from the retroſpect of a life governed, as far as human

frailty permits, by a conſciouſneſs of being always in the preſence of the Deity, and by the hope of an higher world. But her piety could not entirely ſubdue the grief of parting from thoſe whom ſhe ſo dearly loved. During theſe her laſt hours, ſhe converſed much with St. Aubert and Emily, on the proſpect of futurity, and other religious topics. The reſignation ſhe expreſſed, with the firm hope of meeting in a future world the friends ſhe left in this, and the effort which ſometimes appeared to conceal her ſorrow at this temporary ſeparation, frequently affected St. Aubert ſo much as to oblige him to leave the room. Having indulged his tears awhile, he would dry them and return to the chamber with a countenance compoſed by an endeavour which did but increaſe his grief.

Never had Emily felt the importance of the leſſons, which had taught her to reſtrain her ſenſibility, ſo much as in theſe moments, and never had ſhe practiſed them with a triumph ſo complete. But when the laſt

was

was over, ſhe ſunk at once under the preſſure of her ſorrow, and then perceived that it was hope, as well as fortitude, which had hitherto ſupported her. St. Aubert was for a time too devoid of comfort himſelf to beſtow any on his daughter.

CHAP. II.

"I could a tale unfold, whoſe lighteſt word
Would harrow up thy ſoul." SHAKESPEARE.

MADAME St. Aubert was interred in the neighbouring village church; her huſband and daughter attended her to the grave, followed by a long train of the peaſantry, who were ſincere mourners of this excellent woman.

On his return from the funeral, St. Aubert ſhut himſelf in his chamber. When he came forth, it was with a ſerene countenance, though pale in ſorrow. He gave orders that his family ſhould attend him. Emily only was abſent; who, overcome with the ſcene ſhe had juſt witneſſed, had retired to her cloſet to weep alone. St. Aubert followed her thither: he took her hand in ſilence, while ſhe continued to weep; and it was ſome moments before he could ſo far command his voice as to ſpeak. It trembled

while he ſaid, " My Emily, I am going to prayers with my family; you will join us. We muſt aſk ſupport from above. Where elſe ought we to ſeek it—where elſe can we find it?"

Emily checked her tears, and followed her father to the parlour, where, the ſervants being aſſembled, St. Aubert read, in a low and ſolemn voice, the evening ſervice, and added a prayer for the ſoul of the departed. During this, his voice often faltered, his tears fell upon the book, and at length he pauſed. But the ſublime emotions of pure devotion gradually elevated his views above this world, and finally brought comfort to his heart.

When the ſervice was ended, and the ſervants were withdrawn, he tenderly kiſſed Emily, and ſaid, I have endeavoured to teach you, from your earlieſt youth, the duty of ſelf-command; I have pointed out to you the great importance of it through life, not only as it preſerves us in the various and dangerous temptations that call us from

rectitude and virtue, but as it limits the indulgencies which are termed virtuous, yet which, extended beyond a certain boundary, are vicious, for their conſequence is evil. All exceſs is vicious; even that ſorrow, which is amiable in its origin, becomes a ſelfiſh and unjuſt paſſion, if indulged at the expence of our duties—by our duties I mean what we owe to ourſelves, as well as to others. The indulgence of exceſſive grief enervates the mind, and almoſt incapacitates it for again partaking of thoſe various innocent enjoyments which a benevolent God deſigned to be the ſun-ſhine of our lives. My dear Emily, recollect and practiſe the precepts I have ſo often given you, and which your own experience has ſo often ſhewn you to be wiſe.

" Your ſorrow is uſeleſs. Do not receive this as merely a common-place remark, but let reaſon *therefore* reſtrain ſorrow. I would not annihilate your feelings, my child, I would only teach you to command them; for whatever may be the evils reſulting from

a too

a too ſuſceptible heart, nothing can be hoped from an inſenſible one; that, on the other hand, is all vice—vice, of which the deformity is not ſoftened, or the effect conſoled for, by any ſemblance or poſſibility of good. You know my ſufferings, and are, therefore, convinced that mine are not the light words which, on theſe occaſions, are ſo often repeated to deſtroy even the ſources of honeſt emotion, or which merely diſplay the ſelfiſh oſtentation of a falſe philoſophy. I will ſhew my Emily, that I can practiſe what I adviſe. I have ſaid thus much, becauſe I cannot bear to ſee you waſting in uſeleſs ſorrow, for want of that reſiſtance which is due from mind; and I have not ſaid it till now, becauſe there is a period when all reaſoning muſt yield to nature; that is paſt: and another, when exceſſive indulgence, having ſunk into habit, weighs down the elaſticity of the ſpirits ſo as to render conqueſt nearly impoſſible; this is to come. You, my Emily, will ſhew that you are willing to avoid it."

Emily ſmiled through her tears upon her father: "Dear Sir," ſaid ſhe, and her voice trembled; ſhe would have added, "I will ſhew myſelf worthy of being your daughter;" but a mingled emotion of gratitude, affection, and grief overcame her. St. Aubert ſuffered her to weep without interruption, and then began to talk on common topics.

The firſt perſon who came to condole with St. Aubert was a M. Barreaux, an auſtere and ſeemingly unfeeling man. A taſte for botany had introduced them to each other, for they had frequently met in their wanderings among the mountains. M. Barreaux had retired from the world, and almoſt from ſociety, to live in a pleaſant chateau, on the ſkirts of the woods, near La Vallée. He alſo had been diſappointed in his opinion of mankind; but he did not, like St. Aubert, pity and mourn for them; he felt more indignation at their vices, than compaſſion for their weakneſſes.

St. Aubert was ſomewhat ſurpriſed to ſee him;

him; for, though he had often preſſed him to come to the chateau, he had never till now accepted the invitation: and now he came without ceremony or reſerve, entering the parlour as an old friend. The claims of misfortune appeared to have ſoftened down all the ruggedneſs and prejudices of his heart. St. Aubert unhappy, ſeemed to be the ſole idea that occupied his mind. It was in manners, more than in words, that he appeared to ſympathize with his friends: he ſpoke little on the ſubject of their grief; but the minute attention he gave them, and the modulated voice, and ſoftened look that accompanied it, came from his heart, and ſpoke to theirs.

At this melancholy period, St. Aubert was likewiſe viſited by Madame Cheron, his only ſurviving ſiſter, who had been ſome years a widow, and now reſided on her own eſtate near Thouloufe. The intercourſe between them had not been very frequent. In her condolements, words were not wanting; ſhe underſtood not the magic of the look

that ſpeaks at once to the ſoul, or the voice that ſinks like balm to the heart: but ſhe aſſured St. Aubert that ſhe ſincerely ſympathized with him, praiſed the virtues of his late wife, and then offered what ſhe conſidered to be conſolation. Emily wept unceaſingly while ſhe ſpoke; St. Aubert was tranquil, liſtened to what ſhe ſaid in ſilence, and then turned the diſcourſe upon another ſubject.

At parting ſhe preſſed him and her niece to make her an early viſit. "Change of place will amuſe you," ſaid ſhe, "and it is wrong to give way to grief." St. Aubert acknowledged the truth of theſe words of courſe; but, at the ſame time, felt more reluctant than ever to quit the ſpot which his paſt happineſs had conſecrated. The preſence of his wife had ſanctified every ſurrounding ſcene, and each day, as it gradually ſoftened the acuteneſs of his ſuffering, aſſiſted the tender enchantment that bound him to home.

But there were calls which muſt be complied

plied with, and of this kind was the viſit he paid to his brother-in-law M. Queſnel. An affair of an intereſting nature made it neceſſary that he ſhould delay this viſit no longer, and, wiſhing to rouſe Emily from her dejection, he took her with him to Epourville.

As the carriage entered upon the foreſt that adjoined his paternal domain, his eyes once more caught, between the cheſnut avenue, the turreted corners of the chateau. He ſighed to think of what had paſſed ſince he was laſt there, and that it was now the property of a man who neither revered nor valued it. At length he entered the avenue, whoſe lofty trees had ſo often delighted him when a boy, and whoſe melancholy ſhade was now ſo congenial with the tone of his ſpirits. Every feature of the edifice, diſtinguiſhed by an air of heavy grandeur, appeared ſucceſſively between the branches of the trees—the broad turret, the arched gate-way that led into the courts, the draw-bridge, and the dry foſſe which ſurrounded the whole.

The ſound of carriage wheels brought a troop of ſervants to the great gate, where St. Aubert alighted, and from which he led Emily into the gothic hall, now no longer hung with the arms and ancient banners of the family. Theſe were diſplaced, and the oak wainſcoting, and beams that croſſed the roof, were painted white. The large table, too, that uſed to ſtretch along the upper end of the hall, where the maſter of the manſion loved to diſplay his hoſpitality, and whence the peal of laughter, and the ſong of conviviality, had ſo often reſounded, was now removed; even the benches that had ſurrounded the hall were no longer there. The heavy walls were hung with frivolous ornaments, and every thing that appeared denoted the falſe taſte and corrupted ſentiments of the preſent owner.

St. Aubert followed a gay Pariſian ſervant to a parlour, where ſat Monſ. and Madame Queſnel, who received him with a ſtately politeneſs, and, after a few formal words of condolement, ſeemed to have forgotten that they ever had a ſiſter.

Emily

Emily felt tears ſwell in her eyes, and then reſentment checked them. St. Aubert, calm and deliberate, preſerved his dignity without aſſuming importance, and Queſnel was depreſſed by his preſence without exactly knowing wherefore.

After ſome general converſation, St. Aubert requeſted to ſpeak with him alone; and Emily, being left with Madame Queſnel, ſoon learned that a large party was invited to dine at the chateau, and was compelled to hear that nothing which was paſt and irremediable ought to prevent the feſtivity of the preſent hour.

St. Aubert, when he was told that company were expected, felt a mixed emotion of diſguſt and indignation againſt the inſenſibility of Queſnel, which prompted him to return home immediately. But, he was informed, that Madame Cheron had been aſked to meet him; and, when he looked at Emily, and conſidered that a time might come when the enmity of her uncle would be prejudicial to her, he determined not to incur

incur it himſelf, by conduct which would be reſented as indecorous, by the very perſons who now ſhewed ſo little ſenſe of decorum.

Among the viſitors aſſembled at dinner were two Italian gentlemen, of whom one was named Montoni, a diſtant relation of Madame Queſnel, a man about forty, of an uncommonly handſome perſon, with features manly and expreſſive, but whoſe countenance exhibited, upon the whole, more of the haughtineſs of command, and the quickneſs of diſcernment, than of any other character.

Signor Cavigni, his friend, appeared to be about thirty—his inferior in dignity, but equal to him in penetration of countenance, and ſuperior in inſinuation of manner.

Emily was ſhocked by the ſalutation with which Madame Cheron met her father—"Dear brother," ſaid ſhe, "I am concerned to ſee you look ſo very ill; do, pray, have advice!" St. Aubert anſwered, with a melancholy ſmile, that he felt himſelf much as uſual; but Emily's fears made her now fancy

that

that her father looked worſe than he really did.

Emily would have been amuſed by the new characters ſhe ſaw, and the varied converſation that paſſed during dinner, which was ſerved in a ſtyle of ſplendour ſhe had ſeldom ſeen before, had her ſpirits been leſs oppreſſed. Of the gueſts, Signor Montoni was lately come from Italy, and he ſpoke of the commotions which at that period agitated the country; talked of party differences with warmth, and then lamented the probable conſequences of the tumults. His friend ſpoke with equal ardour, of the politics of his country; praiſed the government and proſperity of Venice, and boaſted of its decided ſuperiority over all the other Italian ſtates. He then turned to the ladies, and talked with the ſame eloquence, of Pariſian faſhions, the French opera, and French manners; and on the latter ſubject he did not fail to mingle what is ſo particularly agreeable to French taſte. The flattery was not detected by

thoſe to whom it was addreſſed, though its effect in producing ſubmiſſive attention did not eſcape his obſervation. When he could diſengage himſelf from the aſſiduities of the other ladies, he ſometimes addreſſed Emily: but ſhe knew nothing of Pariſian faſhions, of Pariſian operas; and her modeſty, ſimplicity, and correct manners, formed a decided contraſt to thoſe of her female companions.

After dinner, St. Aubert ſtole from the room to view once more the old cheſnut which Queſnel talked of cutting down. As he ſtood under its ſhade, and looked up among its branches, ſtill luxuriant, and ſaw here and there the blue ſky trembling between them; the purſuits and events of his early days crowded faſt to his mind, with the figures and characters of friends—long ſince gone from the earth; and he now felt himſelf to be almoſt an inſulated being, with nobody but his Emily for his heart to turn to.

He ſtood loſt amid the ſcenes of years which fancy called up, till the ſucceſſion cloſed

cloſed with the picture of his dying wife; and he ſtarted away, to forget it, if poſſible, at the ſocial board.

St. Aubert ordered his carriage at an early hour, and Emily obſerved, that he was more than uſually ſilent and dejected on the way home; but ſhe conſidered this to be the effect of his viſit to a place which ſpoke ſo eloquently of former times, nor ſuſpected that he had a cauſe of grief which he concealed from her.

On entering the chateau ſhe felt more depreſſed than ever, for ſhe more than ever miſſed the preſence of that dear parent, who, whenever ſhe had been from home, uſed to welcome her return with ſmiles and fondneſs: now all was ſilent and forſaken.

But what reaſon and effort may fail to do, time effects. Week after week paſſed away, and each, as it paſſed, ſtole ſomething from the harſhneſs of her affliction, till it was mellowed to that tenderneſs which the feeling heart cheriſhes as ſacred. St. Aubert, on the contrary, viſibly declined in health; though

though Emily, who had been ſo conſtantly with him, was almoſt the laſt perſon who obſerved it. His conſtitution had never recovered from the late attack of the fever, and the ſucceeding ſhock it had received from Madame St. Aubert's death had produced its preſent infirmity. His phyſician now ordered him to travel; for it was perceptible that ſorrow had ſeized upon his nerves, weakened as they had been by the preceding illneſs; and variety of ſcene, it was probable, would, by amuſing his mind, reſtore them to their proper tone.

For ſome days Emily was occupied in preparations to attend him; and he, by endeavours to diminiſh his expences at home during the journey—a purpoſe which determined him at length to diſmiſs his domeſtics. Emily ſeldom oppoſed her father's wiſhes by queſtions or remonſtrances, or ſhe would now have aſked why he did not take a ſervant, and have repreſented that his infirm health made one almoſt neceſſary. But when, on the eve of their departure, ſhe found

found that he had diſmiſſed Jacques, Francis, and Mary, and detained only Thereſa the old houſekeeper, ſhe was extremely ſurpriſed, and ventured to aſk his reaſon for having done ſo. "To ſave expences, my dear," he replied—"we are going on an expenſive excurſion."

The phyſician had preſcribed the air of Languedoc and Provence; and St. Aubert determined, therefore, to travel leiſurely along the ſhores of the Mediterranean, towards Provence.

They retired early to their chamber on the night before their departure; but Emily had a few books and other things to collect, and the clock had ſtruck twelve before ſhe had finiſhed, or had remembered that ſome of her drawing inſtruments, which ſhe meant to take with her, were in the parlour below. As ſhe went to fetch theſe, ſhe paſſed her father's room, and, perceiving the door half open, concluded that he was in his ſtudy—for, ſince the death of Madame St. Aubert, it had been frequently

his

his cuſtom to riſe from his reſtleſs bed, and go thither to compoſe his mind. When ſhe was below ſtairs ſhe looked into this room, but without finding him; and as ſhe returned to her chamber, ſhe tapped at his door, and, receiving no anſwer, ſtepped ſoftly in, to be certain whether he was there.

The room was dark, but a light glimmered through ſome panes of glaſs that were placed in the upper part of a cloſet-door. Emily believed her father to be in the cloſet, and, ſurpriſed that he was up at ſo late an hour, apprehended he was unwell, and was going to enquire; but, conſidering that her ſudden appearance at this hour might alarm him, ſhe removed her light to the ſtair-caſe, and then ſtepped ſoftly to the cloſet. On looking through the panes of glaſs, ſhe ſaw him ſeated at a ſmall table, with papers before him, ſome of which he was reading with deep attention and intereſt, during which he often wept, and ſobbed aloud. Emily, who had come to the door to learn whether her father was ill, was

now

now detained there by a mixture of curioſity and tenderneſs. She could not witneſs his ſorrow without being anxious to know the ſubject of it; and ſhe therefore continued to obſerve him in ſilence, concluding that thoſe papers were letters of her late mother. Preſently he knelt down, and with a look ſo ſolemn as ſhe had ſeldom ſeen him aſſume, and which was mingled with a certain wild expreſſion, that partook more of horror than of any other character, he prayed ſilently for a conſiderable time.

When he roſe, a ghaſtly paleneſs was on his countenance. Emily was haſtily retiring; but ſhe ſaw him turn again to the papers, and ſhe ſtopped. He took from among them a ſmall caſe, and from thence a miniature picture. The rays of light fell ſtrongly upon it, and ſhe perceived it to be that of a lady, but not of her mother.

St. Aubert gazed earneſtly and tenderly upon this portrait, put it to his lips, and then to his heart, and ſighed with a convulſive force. Emily could ſcarcely believe what

ſhe

ſhe ſaw to be real. She never knew till now that he had a picture of any other lady than her mother, much leſs that he had one which he evidently valued ſo highly; but having looked repeatedly, to be certain that it was not the reſemblance of Madame St. Aubert, ſhe became entirely convinced that it was deſigned for that of ſome other perſon.

At length St. Aubert returned the picture into its caſe; and Emily, recollecting that ſhe was intruding upon his private ſorrows, ſoftly withdrew from the chamber.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

" O how canſt thou renounce the boundleſs ſtore
Of charms which nature to her vot'ry yields?
The warbling woodland, the reſounding ſhore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the ſong of even;
All that the mountain's ſhelt'ring boſom ſhields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven;
O how canſt thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!"
. . . . . .
" Theſe charms ſhall work thy ſoul's eternal health,
And love, and gentleneſs, and joy impart."

THE MINSTREL.

ST. AUBERT, inſtead of taking the more direct road, that ran along the feet of the Pyrenées to Languedoc, choſe one that, winding over the heights, afforded more extenſive views and greater variety of romantic ſcenery. He turned a little out of his way to take leave of M. Barreaux, whom he found botanizing in the wood near his chateau, and who, when he was told the purpoſe of

of St. Aubert's viſit, expreſſed a degree of concern, ſuch as his friend had thought it was ſcarcely poſſible for him to feel on any ſimilar occaſion. They parted with mutual regret.

"If any thing could have tempted me from my retirement," ſaid M. Barreaux, "it would have been the pleaſure of accompanying you on this little tour. I do not often offer compliments; you may, therefore, believe me when I ſay, that I ſhall look for your return with impatience."

The travellers proceeded on their journey. As they aſcended the heights, St. Aubert often looked back upon his chateau, in the plain below; tender images crowded to his mind; his melancholy imagination ſuggeſted that he ſhould return no more; and though he checked this wandering thought, ſtill he continued to look, till the hazineſs of diſtance blended his home with the general landſcape, and St. Aubert ſeemed to

"Drag at each remove a lengthening chain."

He

He and Emily continued ſunk in muſing ſilence for ſome leagues, from which melancholy reverie Emily firſt awoke, and her young fancy, ſtruck with the grandeur of the objects around, gradually yielded to delightful impreſſions. The road now deſcended into glens, confined by ſtupendous walls of rock, grey and barren, except where ſhrubs fringed their ſummits, or patches of meagre vegetation tinted their receſſes, in which the wild goat was frequently browſing. And now, the way led to the lofty cliffs, from whence the landſcape was ſeen extending in all its magnificence.

Emily could not reſtrain her tranſport as ſhe looked over the pine foreſts of the mountains upon the vaſt plains, that, enriched with woods, towns, bluſhing vines, and plantations of almonds, palms and olives, ſtretched along, till their various colours melted in diſtance into one harmonious hue, that ſeemed to unite earth with heaven. Through the whole of this glorious ſcene the majeſtic Garonne wandered; deſcending from

its ſource among the Pyrenées, and winding its blue waves towards the Bay of Biſcay.

The ruggedneſs of the unfrequented road often obliged the wanderers to alight from their little carriage, but they thought themſelves amply repaid for this inconvenience by the grandeur of the ſcenes; and, while the muleteer led his animals ſlowly over the broken ground, the travellers had leiſure to linger amid theſe ſolitudes, and to indulge the ſublime reflections, which ſoften, while they elevate, the heart, and fill it with the certainty of a preſent God! Still the enjoyment of St. Aubert was touched with that penſive melancholy, which gives to every object a mellower tint, and breathes a ſacred charm over all around.

They had provided againſt part of the evil to be encountered from a want of convenient inns, by carrying a ſtock of proviſions in the carriage, ſo that they might take refreſhment on any pleaſant ſpot, in the open air, and paſs the nights whereever they ſhould happen to meet with a comfortable

comfortable cottage. For the mind, alſo, they had provided, by a work on botany, written by M. Barreaux, and by ſeveral of the Latin and Italian poets; while Emily's pencil enabled her to preſerve ſome of thoſe combinations of forms, which charmed her at every ſtep.

The lonelineſs of the road, where only now and then a peaſant was ſeen driving his mule, or ſome mountaineer children at play among the rocks, heightened the effect of the ſcenery. St. Aubert was ſo much ſtruck with it, that he determined, if he could hear of a road, to penetrate farther among the mountains, and, bending his way rather more to the ſouth, to emerge into Rouſillon, and coaſt the Mediterranean along part of that country to Languedoc.

Soon after mid-day they reached the ſummit of one of thoſe cliffs, which, bright with the verdure of palm trees, adorn, like gems, the tremendous walls of the rocks, and which overlooked the greater part of Gaſcony, and part of Languedoc.

Here was ſhade, and the freſh water of a ſpring, that gliding among the turf, under the trees, thence precipitated itſelf from rock to rock, till its daſhing murmurs were loſt in the abyſs, though its white foam was long ſeen amid the darkneſs of the pines below.

This was a ſpot well ſuited for reſt, and the travellers alighted to dine, while the mules were unharneſſed to browſe on the ſavoury herbs that enriched this ſummit.

It was ſome time before St. Aubert or Emily could withdraw their attention from the ſurrounding objects, ſo as to partake of their little repaſt. Seated in the ſhade of the palms, St. Aubert pointed out to her obſervation the courſe of the rivers, the ſituation of great towns, and the boundaries of provinces, which ſcience, rather than the eye, enabled him to deſcribe. Notwithſtanding this occupation, when he had talked awhile, he ſuddenly became ſilent, thoughtful, and tears often ſwelled to his eyes, which Emily obſerved, and the ſympathy

pathy of her own heart told her their cauſe. The ſcene before them bore ſome reſemblance, though it was on a much grander ſcale, to a favourite one of the late Madame St. Aubert, within view of the fiſhing-houſe. They both obſerved this, and thought how delighted ſhe would have been with the preſent landſcape, while they knew that her eyes muſt never, never more open upon this world. St. Aubert remembered the laſt time of his viſiting that ſpot in company with her, and alſo the mournfully preſaging thoughts which had then ariſen in his mind, and were now, even thus ſoon, realized! The recollections ſubdued him, and he abruptly roſe from his ſeat, and walked away to where no eye could obſerve his grief.

When he returned, his countenance had recovered its uſual ſerenity; he took Emily's hand, preſſed it affectionately, without ſpeaking, and ſoon after called to the muleteer, who ſat at a little diſtance, concerning a road among the mountains towards

Rouſillon. Michael ſaid, there were ſeveral that way, but he did not know how far they extended, or even whether they were paſſable; and St. Aubert, who did not intend to travel after ſun-ſet, aſked what village they could reach about that time. The muleteer calculated, that they could eaſily reach Mateau, which was in their preſent road; but that if they took a road that ſloped more to the ſouth, towards Rouſillon, there was a hamlet, which he thought they could gain before the evening ſhut in.

St. Aubert, after ſome heſitation, determined to take the latter courſe, and Michael, having finiſhed his meal, and harneſſed his mules, again ſet forward, but ſoon ſtopped; and St. Aubert ſaw him doing homage to a croſs, that ſtood on a rock impending over their way. Having concluded his devotions, he ſmacked his whip in the air, and, in ſpite of the rough road, and the pain of his poor mules, which he had been lately lamenting, rattled, in a full gallop, along the edge of a precipice which it made the eye dizzy

to

to look down. Emily was terrified almoſt to fainting; and St. Aubert, apprehending ſtill greater danger from ſuddenly ſtopping the driver, was compelled to ſit quietly, and truſt his fate to the ſtrength and diſcretion of the mules, who ſeemed to poſſeſs a greater portion of the latter quality than their maſter; for they carried the travellers ſafely into the valley, and there ſtopped upon the brink of the rivulet that watered it.

Leaving the ſplendour of extenſive proſpects, they now entered this narrow valley, ſcreened by

> Rocks on rocks piled, as if by magic ſpell,
> Here ſcorch'd by lightnings, there with ivy green.

The ſcene of barrenneſs was here and there interrupted by the ſpreading branches of the larch and cedar, which threw their gloom over the cliff, or athwart the torrent that rolled in the vale. No living creature appeared, except the izard, ſcrambling among the rocks, and often hanging upon points ſo dangerous, that fancy ſhrunk from

the view of them. This was ſuch a ſcene as *Salvator* would have choſen, had he then exiſted, for his canvaſs; St. Aubert, impreſſed by the romantic character of the place, almoſt expected to ſee banditti ſtart from behind ſome projecting rock, and he kept his hand upon the arms with which he always travelled.

As they advanced, the valley opened; its ſavage features gradually ſoftened, and, towards evening, they were among heathy mountains, ſtretched in far perſpective, along which the ſolitary ſheep-bell was heard, and the voice of the ſhepherd calling his wandering flocks to the nightly fold. His cabin, partly ſhadowed by the cork-tree and the ilex, which St. Aubert obſerved to flouriſh in higher regions of the air than any other trees, except the fir, was all the human habitation that yet appeared. Along the bottom of this valley the moſt vivid verdure was ſpread; and in the little hollow receſſes of the mountains, under the ſhade of the oak and cheſnut, herds of cattle

were

were grazing. Groups of them, too, were often ſeen repoſing on the banks of the rivulet, or laving their ſides in the cool ſtream, and ſipping its wave.

The ſun was now ſetting upon the valley; its laſt light gleamed upon the water, and heightened the rich yellow and purple tints of the heath and broom, that overſpread the mountains. St. Aubert enquired of Michael the diſtance to the hamlet he had mentioned, but the man could not with certainty tell; and Emily began to fear that he had miſtaken the road. Here was no human being to aſſiſt, or direct them; they had left the ſhepherd and his cabin far behind, and the ſcene became ſo obſcured in twilight, that the eye could not follow the diſtant perſpective of the valley, in ſearch of a cottage, or a hamlet. A glow of the horizon ſtill marked the weſt, and this was of ſome little uſe to the travellers. Michael ſeemed endeavouring to keep up his courage by ſinging; his muſic, however, was not of a kind to diſperſe melancholy; he ſung, in

a ſort of chant, one of the moſt diſmal ditties his preſent auditors had ever heard, and St. Aubert at length diſcovered it to be a veſper-hymn to his favourite ſaint.

They travelled on, ſunk in that thoughtful melancholy with which twilight and ſolitude impreſs the mind. Michael had now ended his ditty, and nothing was heard but the drowſy murmur of the breeze among the woods, and its light flutter, as it blew freſhly into the carriage. They were at length rouſed by the ſound of fire-arms. St. Aubert called to the muleteer to ſtop, and they liſtened. The noiſe was not repeated; but preſently they heard a ruſtling among the brakes. St. Aubert drew forth a piſtol, and ordered Michael to proceed as faſt as poſſible; who had not long obeyed, before a horn ſounded, that made the mountains ring. He looked again from the window, and then ſaw a young man ſpring from the buſhes into the road, followed by a couple of dogs. The ſtranger was in a hunter's dreſs. His gun was ſlung acroſs his

his ſhoulders, the hunter's horn hung from his belt, and in his hand was a ſmall pike, which, as he held it, added to the manly grace of his figure, and aſſiſted the agility of his ſteps.

After a moment's heſitation, St. Aubert again ſtopped the carriage, and waited till he came up, that they might enquire concerning the hamlet they were in ſearch of. The ſtranger informed him, that it was only half a league diſtant; that he was going thither himſelf, and would readily ſhew the way. St. Aubert thanked him for the offer, and, pleaſed with his chevalier-like air and open countenance, aſked him to take a ſeat in the carriage; which the ſtranger, with an acknowledgment, declined, adding, that he would keep pace with the mules. "But I fear you will be wretchedly accommodated," ſaid he: "the inhabitants of theſe mountains are a ſimple people, who are not only without the luxuries of life, but almoſt deſtitute of what in other places are held to be its neceſſaries."

"I perceive you are not one of its inhabitants, ſir," ſaid St. Aubert.

"No, ſir, I am only a wanderer here."

The carriage drove on, and the increaſing duſk made the travellers very thankful that they had a guide; the frequent glens, too, that now opened among the mountains, would likewiſe have added to their perplexity. Emily, as ſhe looked up one of theſe, ſaw ſomething at a great diſtance like a bright cloud in the air. "What light is yonder, ſir?" ſaid ſhe. St. Aubert looked, and perceived that it was the ſnowy ſummit of a mountain, ſo much higher than any around it, that it ſtill reflected the ſun's rays, while thoſe below lay in deep ſhade.

At length, village lights were ſeen to twinkle through the duſk, and, ſoon after, ſome cottages were diſcovered in the valley, or rather were ſeen by reflection in the ſtream, on whoſe margin they ſtood, and which ſtill gleamed with the evening light.

The ſtranger now came up, and St. Aubert,

bert, on further enquiry, found not only that there was no inn in the place, but not any ſort of houſe of public reception. The ſtranger, however, offered to walk on, and enquire for a cottage to accommodate them; for which further civility St. Aubert returned his thanks, and ſaid, that, as the village was ſo near, he would alight and walk with him. Emily followed ſlowly in the carriage.

On the way, St. Aubert aſked his companion what ſucceſs he had had in the chaſe. "Not much, ſir," he replied, "nor do I aim at it. I am pleaſed with the country, and mean to ſaunter away a few weeks among its ſcenes. My dogs I take with me more for companionſhip than for game. This dreſs, too, gives me an oſtenſible buſineſs, and procures me that reſpect from the people, which would, perhaps, be refuſed to a lonely ſtranger, who had no viſible motive for coming among them."

"I admire your taſte," ſaid St. Aubert, "and, if I was a younger man, ſhould like

to

to paſs a few weeks in your way exceedingly. I, too, am a wanderer, but neither my plan nor purſuits are exactly like yours—I go in ſearch of health, as much as of amuſement." St. Aubert ſighed, and pauſed; and then, ſeeming to recollect himſelf, he reſumed: "If I can hear of a tolerable road, that ſhall afford decent accommodation, it is my intention to paſs into Rouſillon, and along the ſea-ſhore to Languedoc. You, ſir, ſeem to be acquainted with the country, and can, perhaps, give me information on the ſubject."

The ſtranger ſaid, that what information he could give was entirely at his ſervice; and then mentioned a road rather more to the eaſt, which led to a town, whence it would be eaſy to proceed into Rouſillon.

They now arrived at the village, and commenced their ſearch for a cottage, that would afford a night's lodging. In ſeveral, which they entered, ignorance, poverty, and mirth ſeemed equally to prevail; and the owners eyed St. Aubert with a mixture of curioſity

and timidity. Nothing like a bed could be found, and he had ceaſed to enquire for one, when Emily joined him, who obſerved the languor of her father's countenance, and lamented, that he had taken a road ſo ill provided with the comforts neceſſary for an invalid. Other cottages, which they examined, ſeemed ſomewhat leſs ſavage than the former, conſiſting of two rooms, if ſuch they could be called; the firſt of theſe occupied by mules and pigs, the ſecond by the family, which generally conſiſted of ſix or eight children, with their parents, who ſlept on beds of ſkins and dried beech leaves, ſpread upon a mud floor. Here, light was admitted, and ſmoke diſcharged, through an aperture in the roof; and here the ſcent of ſpirits (for the travelling ſmugglers, who haunted the Pyrenées, had made this rude people familiar with the uſe of liquors) was generally perceptible enough. Emily turned from ſuch ſcenes, and looked at her father with anxious tenderneſs, which the young ſtranger ſeemed to obſerve; for, drawing

drawing St. Aubert aſide, he made him an offer of his own bed. " It is a decent one," ſaid he, " when compared with what we have juſt ſeen, yet ſuch a [illegible] other circumſtances I ſhould be aſ[illegible]ed to offer you." St. Aubert acknowledged how much he felt himſelf obliged by this kindneſs, but refuſed to accept it, till the young ſtranger would take no denial. " Do not give me the pain of knowing, ſir," ſaid he, " that an invalid, like you, lies on hard ſkins, while I ſleep in a bed. Beſides, ſir, your refuſal wounds my pride; I muſt believe you think my offer unworthy your acceptance. Let me ſhew you the way. I have no doubt my landlady can accommodate this young lady alſo."

St. Aubert, at length, conſented, that, if this could be done, he would accept his kindneſs, though he felt rather ſurpriſed, that the ſtranger had proved himſelf ſo deficient in gallantry, as to adminiſter to the repoſe of an infirm man, rather than to that of a very lovely young woman, for he had not

not once offered the room for Emily. But ſhe thought not of herſelf, and the animated ſmile ſhe gave him, told how much ſhe felt herſelf obliged for the preference of her father.

On their way, the ſtranger, whoſe name was Valancourt, ſtepped on firſt to ſpeak to his hoſteſs, and ſhe came out to welcome St. Aubert into a cottage, much ſuperior to any he had ſeen. This good woman ſeemed very willing to accommodate the ſtrangers, who were ſoon compelled to accept the only two beds in the place. Eggs and milk were the only food the cottage afforded; but againſt ſcarcity of proviſions St. Aubert had provided, and he requeſted Valancourt to ſtay, and partake with him of leſs homely fare; an invitation, which was readily accepted, and they paſſed an hour in intelligent converſation. St. Aubert was much pleaſed with the manly frankneſs, ſimplicity, and keen ſuſceptibility to the grandeur of nature, which his new acquaintance diſcovered; and, indeed, he had often been

heard

heard to ſay, that, without a certain ſimplicity of heart, this taſte could not exiſt in any ſtrong degree.

The converſation was interrupted by a violent uproar without, in which the voice of the muleteer was heard above every other ſound. Valancourt ſtarted from his ſeat, and went to enquire the occaſion; but the diſpute continued ſo long afterwards, that St. Aubert went himſelf, and found Michael quarrelling with the hoſteſs, becauſe ſhe had refuſed to let his mules lie in a little room where he and three of her ſons were to paſs the night. The place was wretched enough, but there was no other for theſe people to ſleep in; and, with ſomewhat more of delicacy than was uſual among the inhabitants of this wild tract of country, ſhe perſiſted in refuſing to let the animals have the ſame *bed-chamber* with her children. This was a tender point with the muleteer; his honour was wounded when his mules were treated with diſreſpect, and he would have received a blow, perhaps, with more meekneſs.

meekneſs. He declared that his beaſts were as honeſt beaſts, and as good beaſts, as any in the whole province; and that they had a right to be well treated wherever they went. "They are as harmleſs as lambs," ſaid he, "if people don't affront them. I never knew them behave themſelves amiſs above once or twice in my life, and then they had good reaſon for doing ſo. Once, indeed, they kicked at a boy's leg that lay aſleep in the ſtable, and broke it; but I told them they were out there, and by St. Anthony! I believe they underſtood me, for they never did ſo again."

He concluded this eloquent harangue with proteſting, that they ſhould ſhare with him, go where he would.

The diſpute was at length ſettled by Valancourt, who drew the hoſteſs aſide, and deſired ſhe would let the muleteer and his beaſts have the place in queſtion to themſelves, while her ſons ſhould have the bed of ſkins deſigned for him, for that he would wrap himſelf in his cloak, and ſleep on the bench

bench by the cottage door. But this ſhe thought it her duty to oppoſe, and ſhe felt it to be her inclination to diſappoint the muleteer. Valancourt, however, was poſitive, and the tedious affair was at length ſettled.

It was late when St. Aubert and Emily retired to their rooms, and Valancourt to his ſtation at the door, which, at this mild ſeaſon, he preferred to a cloſe cabin and a bed of ſkins. St. Aubert was ſomewhat ſurpriſed to find in his room volumes of Homer, Horace, and Petrarch; but the name of Valancourt, written in them, told him to whom they belonged.

CHAP. IV.

"In truth he was a ſtrange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle, and each dreadful ſcene:
In darkneſs, and in ſtorm he found delight;
Nor leſs than when on ocean-wave ſerene
The ſouthern ſun diffus'd his dazzling ſheen.
Even ſad viciſſitude amus'd his ſoul;
And if a ſigh would ſometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A ſigh, a tear, ſo ſweet, he wiſh'd not to controul."

THE MINSTREL.

ST. AUBERT awoke at an early hour, refreſhed by ſleep, and deſirous to ſet forward. He invited the ſtranger to breakfaſt with him; and, talking again of the road, Valancourt ſaid, that, ſome months paſt, he had travelled as far as Beaujeu, which was a town of ſome conſequence on the way to Rouſillon. He recommended it to St. Aubert to take that route, and the latter determined to do ſo.

"The

" The road from this hamlet," ſaid Valancourt, " and that to Beaujeu, part at the diſtance of about a league and a half from hence; if you will give me leave, I will direct your muleteer ſo far. I muſt wander ſomewhere, and your company would make this a pleaſanter ramble than any other I could take."

St. Aubert thankfully accepted his offer, and they ſet out together, the young ſtranger on foot, for he refuſed the invitation of St. Aubert to take a ſeat in his little carriage.

The road wound along the feet of the mountains through a paſtoral valley, bright with verdure, and varied with groves of dwarf oak, beech, and ſycamore, under whoſe branches herds of cattle repoſed. The mountain-aſh too, and the weeping birch, often threw their pendant foliage over the ſteeps above, where the ſcanty ſoil ſcarcely concealed their roots, and where their light branches waved to every breeze that fluttered from the mountains.

The

The travellers were frequently met at this early hour, for the ſun had not yet riſen upon the valley, by ſhepherds driving immenſe flocks from their folds to feed upon the hills. St. Aubert had ſet out thus early, not only that he might enjoy the firſt appearance of ſun-riſe, but that he might inhale the firſt pure breath of morning, which above all things is refreſhing to the ſpirits of the invalid. In theſe regions it was particularly ſo, where an abundance of wild flowers and aromatic herbs breathed forth their eſſence on the air.

The dawn, which ſoftened the ſcenery with its peculiar grey tint, now diſperſed, and Emily watched the progreſs of the day, firſt trembling on the tops of the higheſt cliffs, then touching them with ſplendid light, while their ſides and the vale below were ſtill wrapt in dewy miſt. Meanwhile, the ſullen grey of the eaſtern clouds began to bluſh, then to redden, and then to glow with a thouſand colours, till the golden light darted over all the air, touched the lower points

points of the mountain's brow, and glanced in long ſloping beams upon the valley and its ſtream. All nature ſeemed to have awakened from death into life; the ſpirit of St. Aubert was renovated. His heart was full; he wept, and his thoughts aſcended to the Great Creator.

Emily wiſhed to trip along the turf, ſo green and bright with dew, and to taſte the full delight of that liberty which the izard ſeemed to enjoy as he bounded along the brow of the cliffs; while Valancourt often ſtopped to ſpeak with the travellers, and with ſocial feeling to point out to them the peculiar objects of his admiration. St. Aubert was pleaſed with him: "Here is the real ingenuouſneſs and ardour of youth," ſaid he to himſelf; "this young man has never been at Paris."

He was ſorry when they came to the ſpot where the roads parted, and his heart took a more affectionate leave of him than is uſual after ſo ſhort an acquaintance. Valancourt talked long by the ſide of the carriage;

riage; ſeemed more than once to be going, but ſtill lingered, and appeared to ſearch anxiouſly for topics of converſation to account for his delay. At length he took leave. As he went, St. Aubert obſerved him look with an earneſt and penſive eye at Emily, who bowed to him with a countenance full of timid ſweetneſs, while the carriage drove on. St. Aubert, for whatever reaſon, ſoon after looked from the window, and ſaw Valancourt ſtanding upon the bank of the road, reſting on his pike with folded arms, and following the carriage with his eyes. He waved his hand, and Valancourt, ſeeming to awake from his reverie, returned the ſalute, and ſtarted away.

The aſpect of the country now began to change, and the travellers ſoon found themſelves among mountains covered from their baſe nearly to their ſummits with foreſts of gloomy pine, except where a rock of granite ſhot up from the vale, and loſt its ſnowy top in the clouds. The ri-

vulet, which had hitherto accompanied them, now expanded into a river; and, flowing deeply and ſilently along, reflected, as in a mirror, the blackneſs of the impending ſhades. Sometimes a cliff was ſeen lifting its bold head above the woods and the vapours, that floated mid-way down the mountains; and ſometimes a face of perpendicular marble roſe from the water's edge, over which the larch threw his gigantic arms, here ſcathed with lightning, and there floating in luxuriant foliage.

They continued to travel over a rough and unfrequented road, ſeeing now and then at a diſtance the ſolitary ſhepherd, with his dog, ſtalking along the valley, and hearing only the daſhing of torrents, which the woods concealed from the eye, the long ſullen murmur of the breeze, as it ſwept over the pines, or the notes of the eagle and the vulture, which were ſeen towering round the beetling cliff.

Often, as the carriage moved ſlowly over uneven ground, St. Aubert alighted, and

and amuſed himſelf with examining the curious plants that grew on the banks of the road, and with which theſe regions abound; while Emily, wrapt in high enthuſiaſm, wandered away under the ſhades, liſtening in deep ſilence to the lonely murmur of the woods.

Neither village nor hamlet was ſeen for many leagues; the goat-herd's or the hunter's cabin, perched among the cliffs of the rocks, were the only human habitations that appeared.

The travellers again took their dinner in the open air, on a pleaſant ſpot in the valley under the ſpreading ſhade of cedars; and then ſet forward towards Beaujeu.

The road now began to aſcend, and, leaving the pine foreſts behind, wound among rocky precipices. The evening twilight again fell over the ſcene, and the travellers were ignorant how far they might yet be from Beaujeu. St. Aubert, however, conjectured that the diſtance could not be very great, and comforted

himſelf with the proſpect of travelling on a more frequented road after reaching that town, where he deſigned to paſs the night. Mingled woods, and rocks, and heathy mountains were now ſeen obſcurely through the duſk; but ſoon even theſe imperfect images faded in darkneſs. Michael proceeded with caution, for he could ſcarcely diſtinguiſh the road; his mules, however, ſeemed to have more ſagacity, and their ſteps were ſure.

On turning the angle of a mountain, a light appeared at a diſtance, that illumined the rocks, and the horizon to a great extent. It was evidently a large fire, but whether accidental or otherwiſe, there were no means of knowing. St. Aubert thought it was probably kindled by ſome of the numerous banditti, that infeſted the Pyrenées, and he became watchful, and anxious to know whether the road paſſed near this fire. He had arms with him, which, on an emergency, might afford ſome protection, though certainly a very unequal one, againſt a band

a band of robbers, ſo deſperate too as thoſe uſually were who haunted theſe wild regions. While many reflections roſe upon his mind, he heard a voice ſhouting from the road behind, and ordering the muleteer to ſtop. St. Aubert bade him proceed as faſt as poſſible; but either Michael, or his mules were obſtinate, for they did not quit the old pace. Horſes' feet were now heard; a man rode up to the carriage, ſtill ordering the driver to ſtop; and St. Aubert, who could no longer doubt his purpoſe, was with difficulty able to prepare a piſtol for his defence, when his hand was upon the door of the chaiſe. The man ſtaggered on his horſe, the report of the piſtol was followed by a groan, and St. Aubert's horror may be imagined, when in the next inſtant he thought he heard the faint voice of Valancourt. He now himſelf bade the muleteer ſtop; and, pronouncing the name of Valancourt, was anſwered in a voice, that no longer ſuffered him to doubt. St. Aubert, who inſtantly

alighted and went to his aſſiſtance, found him ſtill ſitting on his horſe, but bleeding profuſely, and appearing to be in great pain, though he endeavoured to ſoften the terror of St. Aubert by aſſurances that he was not materially hurt, the wound being only in his arm. St. Aubert, with the muleteer, aſſiſted him to diſmount, and he ſat down on the bank of the road, where St. Aubert tried to bind up his arm, but his hands trembled ſo exceſſively that he could not accompliſh it; and, Michael being now gone in purſuit of the horſe, which, on being diſengaged from his rider, had galloped off, he called Emily to his aſſiſtance. Receiving no anſwer, he went to the carriage, and found her ſunk on the ſeat in a fainting fit. Between the diſtreſs of this circumſtance and that of leaving Valancourt bleeding, he ſcarcely knew what he did; he endeavoured, however, to raiſe her, and called to Michael to fetch water from the rivulet that flowed by the road, but Michael was gone beyond the reach of his

his voice. Valancourt, who heard theſe calls, and alſo the repeated name of Emily, inſtantly underſtood the ſubject of his diſtreſs; and, almoſt forgetting his own condition, he haſtened to her relief. She was reviving when he reached the carriage; and then, underſtanding that anxiety for him had occaſioned her indiſpoſition, he aſſured her, in a voice that trembled, but not from anguiſh, that his wound was of no conſequence. While he ſaid this St. Aubert turned round, and perceiving that he was ſtill bleeding, the ſubject of his alarm changed again, and he haſtily formed ſome handkerchiefs into a bandage. This ſtopped the effuſion of the blood; but St. Aubert, dreading the conſequence of the wound, enquired repeatedly how far they were from Beaujeu; when learning that it was at two leagues diſtance, his diſtreſs increaſed, ſince he knew not how Valancourt, in his preſent ſtate, would bear the motion of the carriage, and perceived that he was already faint from loſs of blood. When he

mentioned the ſubject of his anxiety, Valancourt entreated that he would not ſuffer himſelf to be thus alarmed on his account, for that he had no doubt he ſhould be able to ſupport himſelf very well; and then he talked of the accident as a ſlight one. The muleteer being now returned with Valancourt's horſe, aſſiſted him into the chaiſe: and, as Emily was now revived, they moved ſlowly on towards Beaujeu.

St. Aubert, when he had recovered from the terror occaſioned him by this accident, expreſſed ſurpriſe on ſeeing Valancourt, who explained his unexpected appearance by ſaying, "You, Sir, renewed my taſte for ſociety; when you had left the hamlet, it did indeed appear a ſolitude. I determined, therefore, ſince my object was merely amuſement, to change the ſcene; and I took this road, becauſe I knew it led through a more romantic tract of mountains than the ſpot I have left. Beſides," added he, heſitating for an inſtant, "I will own, and why

why ſhould I not? that I had ſome hope of overtaking you."

"And I have made you a very unexpected return for the compliment," ſaid St. Aubert, who lamented again the raſhneſs which had produced the accident, and explained the cauſe of his late alarm. But Valancourt ſeemed anxious only to remove from the minds of his companions every unpleaſant feeling relative to himſelf; and, for that purpoſe, ſtill ſtruggled againſt a ſenſe of pain, and tried to converſe with gaiety. Emily mean while was ſilent, except when Valancourt particularly addreſſed her, and there was at thoſe times a tremulous tone in his voice that ſpoke much.

They were now ſo near the fire which had long flamed at a diſtance on the blackneſs of night, that it gleamed upon the road, and they could diſtinguiſh figures moving about the blaze. The way winding ſtill nearer, they perceived in the valley one of thoſe numerous bands of gipſies, which at that period particularly haunted the

wilds of the Pyrenées, and lived partly by plundering the traveller. Emily looked with ſome degree of terror on the ſavage countenances of theſe people, ſhewn by the fire, which heightened the romantic effect of the ſcenery, as it threw a red duſky gleam upon the rocks and on the foliage of the trees, leaving heavy maſſes of ſhade and regions of obſcurity, which the eye feared to penetrate.

They were preparing their ſupper; a large pot ſtood by the fire, over which ſeveral figures were buſy. The blaze diſcovered a rude kind of tent, round which many children and dogs were playing, and the whole formed a picture highly groteſque. The travellers ſaw plainly their danger. Valancourt was ſilent, but laid his hand on one of St. Aubert's piſtols; St. Aubert drew forth another, and Michael was ordered to proceed as faſt as poſſible. They paſſed the place, however, without being attacked; the rovers being probably

probably unprepared for the opportunity, and too buſy about their ſupper to feel much intereſt, at the moment, in any thing beſides.

After a league and a half more paſſed in darkneſs, the travellers arrived at Beaujeu, and drove up to the only inn the place afforded; which, though ſuperior to any they had ſeen ſince they entered the mountains, was bad enough.

The ſurgeon of the town was immediately ſent for, if a ſurgeon he could be called, who preſcribed for horſes as well as for men, and ſhaved faces at leaſt as dexterouſly as he ſet bones. After examining Valancourt's arm, and perceiving that the bullet had paſſed through the fleſh without touching the bone, he dreſſed it, and left him with a ſolemn preſcription of quiet, which his patient was not inclined to obey. The delight of eaſe had now ſucceeded to pain; for eaſe may be allowed to aſſume a poſitive quality when contraſted with anguiſh; and, his ſpirits thus re-animated,

he wiſhed to partake of the converſation of St. Aubert and Emily, who, releaſed from ſo many apprehenſions, were uncommonly cheerful. Late as it was, however, St. Aubert was obliged to go out with the landlord to buy meat for ſupper; and Emily, who, during this interval, had been abſent as long as ſhe could, upon excuſes of looking to their accommodation, which ſhe found rather better than ſhe expected, was compelled to return, and converſe with Valancourt alone. They talked of the character of the ſcenes they had paſſed, of the natural hiſtory of the country, of poetry, and of St. Aubert; a ſubject on which Emily always ſpoke and liſtened to with peculiar pleaſure.

The travellers paſſed an agreeable evening, but St. Aubert was fatigued with his journey; and, as Valancourt ſeemed again ſenſible of pain, they ſeparated ſoon after ſupper.

In the morning, St. Aubert found that Valancourt had paſſed a reſtleſs night; that

that he was feveriſh, and his wound very painful. The ſurgeon, when he dreſſed it, adviſed him to remain quietly at Beaujeu; advice which was too reaſonable to be rejected. St. Aubert, however, had no favourable opinion of this practitioner, and was anxious to commit Valancourt into more ſkilful hands; but learning, upon enquiry, that there was no town within ſeveral leagues which ſeemed more like to afford better advice, he altered the plan of his journey, and determined to await the recovery of Valancourt, who, with ſomewhat more ceremony than ſincerity, made many objections to this delay.

By order of his ſurgeon, Valancourt did not go out of the houſe that day; but St. Aubert and Emily ſurveyed with delight the environs of the town, ſituated at the feet of the Pyrenean Alps, that roſe, ſome in abrupt precipices, and others ſwelling with woods of cedar, fir, and cypreſs, which ſtretched nearly to their higheſt ſummits. The cheerful green of the beech and moun-

tain-

tain-aſh was ſometimes ſeen, like a gleam of light, amidſt the dark verdure of the foreſt; and ſometimes a torrent poured its ſparkling flood, high among the woods.

Valancourt's indiſpoſition detained the travellers at Beaujeu ſeveral days, during which interval St. Aubert had obſerved his diſpoſition and his talents with the philoſophic enquiry ſo natural to him. He ſaw a frank and generous nature, full of ardour, highly ſuſceptible of whatever is grand and beautiful, but impetuous, wild, and ſomewhat romantic. Valancourt had known little of the world. His perceptions were clear, and his feelings juſt; his indignation of an unworthy, or his admiration of a generous action, were expreſſed in terms of equal vehemence. St. Aubert ſometimes ſmiled at his warmth, but ſeldom checked it, and often repeated to himſelf, "This young man has never been at Paris." A ſigh ſometimes followed this ſilent ejaculation. He determined not to leave Valancourt till he ſhould be perfectly recovered;

and, as he was now well enough to travel, though not able to manage his horſe, St. Aubert invited him to accompany him for a few days in the carriage. This he the more readily did, ſince he had diſcovered that Valancourt was of a family of the ſame name in Gaſcony, with whoſe reſpectability he was well acquainted. The latter accepted the offer with great pleaſure, and they again ſet forward among theſe romantic wilds towards Rouſillon.

They travelled leiſurely; ſtopping wherever a ſcene uncommonly grand appeared; frequently alighting to walk to an eminence, whither the mules could not go, from which the proſpect opened in greater magnificence; and often ſauntering over hillocks covered with lavender, wild thyme, juniper, and tamariſc; and under the ſhades of woods, between whoſe boles they caught the long mountain-viſta, ſublime beyond any thing that Emily had ever imagined.

St.

St. Aubert ſometimes amuſed himſelf with botanizing, while Valancourt and Emily ſtrolled on; he pointing out to her notice the objects that particularly charmed him, and reciting beautiful paſſages from ſuch of the Latin and Italian poets as he had heard her admire. In the pauſes of converſation, when he thought himſelf not obſerved, he frequently fixed his eyes penſively on her countenance, which expreſſed with ſo much animation the taſte and energy of her mind; and when he ſpoke again, there was a peculiar tenderneſs in the tone of his voice, that defeated any attempt to conceal his ſentiments. By degrees theſe ſilent pauſes became more frequent; till Emily, only, betrayed an anxiety to interrupt them; and ſhe, who had been hitherto reſerved, would now talk again, and again, of the woods and the vallies and the mountains, to avoid the danger of ſympathy and ſilence.

From Beaujeu the road had conſtantly aſcended, conducting the travellers into the higher

higher regions of the air, where immenſe glaciers exhibited their frozen horrors, and eternal ſnow whitened the ſummits of the mountains. They often pauſed to contemplate theſe ſtupendous ſcenes, and, ſeated on ſome wild cliff, where only the ilex or the larch could flouriſh, looked over dark foreſts of fir, and precipices where human foot had never wandered, into the glen—ſo deep, that the thunder of the torrent, which was ſeen to foam along the bottom, was ſcarcely heard to murmur. Over theſe crags roſe others of ſtupendous height, and fantaſtic ſhape; ſome ſhooting into cones; others impending far over their baſe, in huge maſſes of granite, along whoſe broken ridges was often lodged a weight of ſnow, that, trembling even to the vibration of a ſound, threatened to bear deſtruction in its courſe to the vale. Around, on every ſide, far as the eye could penetrate, were ſeen only forms of grandeur—the long perſpective of mountain tops, tinged with ethereal blue, or white with ſnow; vallies of ice, and

and foreſts of gloomy fir. The ſerenity and clearneſs of the air in theſe high regions were particularly delightful to the travellers; it ſeemed to inſpire them with a finer ſpirit, and diffuſed an indeſcribable complacency over their minds. They had no words to expreſs the ſublime emotions they felt. A ſolemn expreſſion characterized the feelings of St. Aubert; tears often came to his eyes, and he frequently walked away from his companions. Valancourt now and then ſpoke, to point to Emily's notice ſome feature of the ſcene. The thinneſs of the atmoſphere, through which every object came ſo diſtinctly to the eye, ſurpriſed and deluded her; who could ſcarcely believe that objects, which appeared ſo near, were, in reality, ſo diſtant. The deep ſilence of theſe ſolitudes was broken only at intervals by the ſcream of the vultures, ſeen cowering round ſome cliff below, or by the cry of the eagle ſailing high in the air; except when the travellers liſtened to the hollow thunder that ſometimes muttered

tered at their feet. While, above, the deep blue of the heavens was unobſcured by the lighteſt cloud, half way down the mountains, long billows of vapour were frequently ſeen rolling, now wholly excluding the country below, and now opening, and partially revealing its features. Emily delighted to obſerve the grandeur of theſe clouds as they changed in ſhape and tints, and to watch their various effect on the lower world, whoſe features, partly veiled, were continually aſſuming new forms of ſublimity.

After traverſing theſe regions for many leagues, they began to deſcend towards Rouſſillon, and features of beauty then mingled with the ſcene. Yet the travellers did not look back without ſome regret to the ſublime objects they had quitted; though the eye, fatigued with the extenſion of its powers, was glad to repoſe on the verdure of woods and paſtures, that now hung on the margin of the river below; to view again the humble cottage ſhaded by cedars,

cedars, the playful group of mountaineer-children, and the flowery nooks that appeared among the hills.

As they deſcended, they ſaw at a diſtance, on the right, one of the grand paſſes of the Pyrenées into Spain, gleaming with its battlements and towers to the ſplendour of the ſetting rays, yellow tops of woods colouring the ſteeps below, while far above aſpired the ſnowy points of the mountains, ſtill reflecting a roſy hue.

St. Aubert began to look out for the little town he had been directed to by the people of Beaujeu, and where he meant to paſs the night; but no habitation yet appeared. Of its diſtance Valancourt could not aſſiſt him to judge, for he had never been ſo far along this chain of Alps before. There was, however, a road to guide them; and there could be little doubt that it was the right one; for, ſince they had left Beaujeu, there had been no variety of tracks to perplex or miſlead.

The

The ſun now gave his laſt light, and St. Aubert bade the muleteer proceed with all poſſible diſpatch. He found, indeed, the laſſitude of illneſs return upon him, after a day of uncommon fatigue, both of body and mind, and he longed for repoſe. His anxiety was not ſoothed by obſerving a numerous train, conſiſting of men, horſes, and loaded mules, winding down the ſteeps of an oppoſite mountain, appearing and diſappearing at intervals among the woods, ſo that its numbers could not be judged of. Something bright, like arms, glanced in the ſetting ray, and the military dreſs was diſtinguiſhable upon the men who were in the van, and on others ſcattered among the troop that followed. As theſe wound into the vale, the rear of the party emerged from the woods, and exhibited a band of ſoldiers. St. Aubert's apprehenſions now ſubſided; he had no doubt that the train before him conſiſted of ſmugglers, who, in conveying prohibited goods

goods over the Pyrenées, had been encountered, and conquered by a party of troops.

The travellers had lingered ſo long among the ſublimer ſcenes of theſe mountains, that they found themſelves entirely miſtaken in their calculation that they could reach Montigny at ſun-ſet; but, as they wound along the valley, they ſaw, on a rude Alpine bridge, that united two lofty crags of the glen, a group of mountaineer-children, amuſing themſelves with dropping pebbles into a torrent below, and watching the ſtones plunge into the water, that threw up its white ſpray high in the air as it received them, and returned a ſullen ſound, which the echoes of the mountains prolonged. Under the bridge was ſeen a perſpective of the valley, with its cataract deſcending among the rocks, and a cottage on a cliff, overſhadowed with pines. It appeared, that they could not be far from ſome ſmall town. St. Aubert bade the muleteer ſtop, and then called to the children to enquire

if

if he was near Montigny; but the diſtance, and the roaring of the waters, would not ſuffer his voice to be heard; and the crags, adjoining the bridge, were of ſuch tremendous height and ſteepneſs, that to have climbed either would have been ſcarcely practicable to a perſon unacquainted with the aſcent. St. Aubert, therefore, did not waſte more moments in delay. They continued to travel long after twilight had obſcured the road, which was ſo broken, that, now thinking it ſafer to walk than to ride, they all alighted. The moon was riſing, but her light was yet too feeble to aſſiſt them. While they ſtepped carefully on, they heard the veſper-bell of a convent. The twilight would not permit them to diſtinguiſh any thing like a building, but the ſounds ſeemed to come from ſome woods, that overhung an acclivity to the right. Valancourt propoſed to go in ſearch of this convent. "If they will not accommodate us with a night's lodging," ſaid he, "they may certainly

inform

inform us how far we are from Montigny, and direct us towards it." He was bounding forward, without waiting St. Aubert's reply, when the latter ſtopped him. "I am very weary," ſaid St. Aubert, "and wiſh for nothing ſo much as for immediate reſt. We will all go to the convent; your good looks would defeat our purpoſe; but when they ſee mine and Emily's exhauſted countenances, they will ſcarcely deny us repoſe."

As he ſaid this, he took Emily's arm within his, and, telling Michael to wait a while in the road with the carriage, they began to aſcend towards the woods, guided by the bell of the convent. His ſteps were feeble, and Valancourt offered him his arm, which he accepted. The moon now threw a faint light over their path, and, ſoon after, enabled them to diſtinguiſh ſome towers riſing above the tops of the woods. Still following the note of the bell, they entered the ſhade of thoſe woods, lighted only by the moon-beams, that glided down

between the leaves, and threw a tremulous uncertain gleam upon the ſteep track they were winding. The gloom and the ſilence that prevailed, except when the bell returned upon the air, together with the wildneſs of the ſurrounding ſcene, ſtruck Emily with a degree of fear, which, however, the voice and converſation of Valancourt ſomewhat repreſſed. When they had been ſome time aſcending, St. Aubert complained of wearineſs, and they ſtopped to reſt upon a little green ſummit, where the trees opened, and admitted the moon-light. He ſat down upon the turf, between Emily and Valancourt. The bell had now ceaſed, and the deep repoſe of the ſcene was undiſturbed by any ſound, for the low dull murmur of ſome diſtant torrents might be ſaid to ſooth, rather than to interrupt the ſilence.

Before them, extended the valley they had quitted; its rocks, and woods to the left, juſt ſilvered by the rays, formed a contraſt to the deep ſhadow, that involved the

oppoſite cliffs, whoſe fringed ſummits only were tipped with light; while the diſtant perſpective of the valley was loſt in the yellow miſt of moon-light. The travellers ſat for ſome time wrapt in the complacency which ſuch ſcenes inſpire.

"Theſe ſcenes," ſaid Valancourt, at length, "ſoften the heart, like the notes of ſweet muſic, and inſpire that delicious melancholy which no perſon, who had felt it once, would reſign for the gayeſt pleaſures. They waken our beſt and pureſt feelings, diſpoſing us to benevolence, pity, and friendſhip. Thoſe whom I love—I always ſeem to love more in ſuch an hour as this." His voice trembled, and he pauſed.

St. Aubert was ſilent; Emily perceived a warm tear fall upon the hand he held; ſhe knew the object of his thoughts; hers too had, for ſome time, been occupied by the remembrance of her mother. He ſeemed by an effort to rouſe himſelf. "Yes," ſaid he, with an half-ſuppreſſed ſigh, "the memory of thoſe we love—of times for ever paſt!

paſt! in ſuch an hour as this ſteals upon the mind, like a ſtrain of diſtant muſic in the ſtillneſs of night;—all tender and harmonious as this landſcape, ſleeping in the mellow moon-light." After the pauſe of a moment, St. Aubert added, "I have always fancied, that I thought with more clearneſs and preciſion, at ſuch an hour, than at any other; and that heart muſt be inſenſible in a great degree, that does not ſoften to its influence. But many ſuch there are."

Valancourt ſighed.

"Are there, indeed, many ſuch?" ſaid Emily.

"A few years hence, my Emily," replied St. Aubert, "and you may ſmile at the recollection of that queſtion—if you do not weep to it. But come, I am ſomewhat refreſhed, let us proceed."

Having emerged from the woods, they ſaw, upon a turfy hillock above, the convent of which they were in ſearch. An high wall, that ſurrounded it, led them to an ancient gate, at which they knocked; and the

poor monk, who opened it, conducted them into a ſmall adjoining room, where he deſired they would wait while he informed the ſuperior of their requeſt. In this interval, ſeveral friars came in ſeparately to look at them; and at length the firſt monk returned, and they followed him to a room, where the ſuperior was ſitting in an arm-chair, with a large folio volume, printed in black letter, open on a deſk before him. He received them with courteſy, though he did not riſe from his ſeat; and, having aſked them a few queſtions, granted their requeſt. After a ſhort converſation, formal and ſolemn on the part of the ſuperior, they withdrew to the apartment, where they were to ſup, and Valancourt, whom one of the inferior friars civilly deſired to accompany, went to ſeek Michael and his mules. They had not deſcended half way down the cliffs, before they heard the voice of the muleteer echoing far and wide. Sometimes he called on St. Aubert, and ſometimes on Valancourt; who having, at length, convinced

him

him that he had nothing to fear, either for himſelf or his maſter; and having diſpoſed of him, for the night, in a cottage on the ſkirts of the woods, returned to ſup with his friends, on ſuch ſober fare as the monks thought it prudent to ſet before them. While St. Aubert was too much indiſpoſed to ſhare it, Emily, in her anxiety for her father, forgot herſelf; and Valancourt, ſilent and thoughtful, yet never inattentive to them, appeared particularly ſolicitous to accommodate and relieve St. Aubert, who often obſerved, while his daughter was preſſing him to eat, or adjuſting the pillow ſhe had placed in the back of his arm-chair, that Valancourt fixed on her a look of penſive tenderneſs, which he was not diſpleaſed to underſtand.

They ſeparated at an early hour, and retired to their reſpective apartments. Emily was ſhewn to hers by a nun of the convent, whom ſhe was glad to diſmiſs, for her heart was melancholy, and her attention ſo much abſtracted, that converſation with a ſtranger

was painful. She thought her father daily declining, and attributed his preſent fatigue more to the feeble ſtate of his frame, than to the difficulty of the journey. A train of gloomy ideas haunted her mind, till ſhe fell aſleep.

In about two hours after, ſhe was awakened by the chiming of a bell, and then heard quick ſteps paſs along the gallery, into which her chamber opened. She was ſo little accuſtomed to the manners of a convent, as to be alarmed by this circumſtance; her fears, ever alive for her father, ſuggeſted that he was very ill, and ſhe roſe in haſte to go to him. Having pauſed, however, to let the perſons in the gallery paſs before ſhe opened her door, her thoughts, in the mean time, recovered from the confuſion of ſleep, and ſhe underſtood that the bell was the call of the monks to prayers. It had now ceaſed, and, all being again ſtill, ſhe forbore to go to St. Aubert's room. Her mind was not diſpoſed for immediate ſleep, and the moon-light, that ſhone into her chamber,

chamber, invited her to open the caſement, and look out upon the country.

It was a ſtill and beautiful night, the ſky was unobſcured by any cloud, and ſcarce a leaf of the woods beneath trembled in the air. As ſhe liſtened, the mid-night hymn of the monks roſe ſoftly from a chapel, that ſtood on one of the lower cliffs, an holy ſtrain, that ſeemed to aſcend through the ſilence of night to heaven, and her thoughts aſcended with it. From the conſideration of his works, her mind aroſe to the adoration of the Deity, in his goodneſs and power; wherever ſhe turned her view, whether on the ſleeping earth, or to the vaſt regions of ſpace, glowing with worlds beyond the reach of human thought, the ſublimity of God and the majeſty of his preſence appeared. Her eyes were filled with tears of awful love and admiration; and ſhe felt that pure devotion, ſuperior to all the diſtinctions of human ſyſtem, which lifts the ſoul above this world, and ſeems to expand it into a nobler nature; ſuch devotion as

can, perhaps, only be experienced when the mind, reſcued, for a moment, from the humbleneſs of earthly conſiderations, aſpires to contemplate His power in the ſublimity of His works, and His goodneſs in the infinity of His bleſſings.

. . . . "Is it not now the hour,
The holy hour, when to the cloudleſs height
Of yon ſtarred concave climbs the full-orbed moon,
And to this nether world in ſolemn ſtillneſs
Gives ſign, that to the liſt'ning ear of Heaven
Religion's voice ſhould plead? The very babe
Knows this, and, 'chance awak'd, his little hands
Lifts to the gods, and on his innocent couch
Calls down a bleſſing*."

The midnight chant of the monks ſoon after dropped into ſilence; but Emily remained at the caſement, watching the ſetting moon, and the valley ſinking into deep ſhade, and willing to prolong her preſent ſtate of mind. At length ſhe retired to her mattreſs, and ſunk into tranquil ſlumber.

* Caractacus.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

. . . . . While in the roſy vale
Love breath'd his infant ſighs, from anguiſh free.

THOMSON.

ST. AUBERT, ſufficiently reſtored by a night's repoſe to purſue his journey, ſet out in the morning, with his family and Valancourt, for Rouſillon, which he hoped to reach before night-fall. The ſcenes, through which they now paſſed, were as wild and romantic as any they had yet obſerved, with this difference, that beauty, every now and then, ſoftened the landſcape into ſmiles. Little woody receſſes appeared among the mountains, covered with bright verdure and flowers; or a paſtoral valley opened its graſſy boſom in the ſhade of the cliffs, with flocks and herds loitering along the banks

of a rivulet, that refreſhed it with perpetual green. St. Aubert could not repent the having taken this fatiguing road, though he was this day, alſo, frequently obliged to alight, to walk along the rugged precipice, and to climb the ſteep and flinty mountain. The wonderful ſublimity and variety of the proſpects repaid him for all this, and the enthuſiaſm, with which they were viewed by his young companions, heightened his own, and awakened a remembrance of all the delightful emotions of his early days, when the ſublime charms of nature were firſt unveiled to him. He found great pleaſure in converſing with Valancourt, and in liſtening to his ingenious remarks. The fire and ſimplicity of his manners ſeemed to render him a characteriſtic figure in the ſcenes around them; and St. Aubert diſcovered in his ſentiments the juſtneſs and the dignity of an elevated mind, unbiaſſed by intercourſe with the world. He perceived, that his opinions were formed, rather than imbibed; were more the reſult of thought,

than

than of learning. Of the world he ſeemed to know nothing; for he believed well of all mankind, and this opinion gave him the reflected image of his own heart.

St. Aubert, as he ſometimes lingered to examine the wild plants in his path, often looked forward with pleaſure to Emily and Valancourt, as they ſtrolled on together; he, with a countenance of animated delight, pointing to her attention ſome grand feature of the ſcene; and ſhe, liſtening and obſerving with a look of tender ſerioufneſs, that ſpoke the elevation of her mind. They appeared like two lovers who had never ſtrayed beyond theſe their native mountains; whoſe ſituation had ſecluded them from the frivolities of common life, whoſe ideas were ſimple and grand, like the landſcapes among which they moved, and who knew no other happineſs, than in the union of pure and affectionate hearts. St. Aubert ſmiled, and ſighed at the romantic picture of felicity his fancy drew; and ſighed again to think, that nature and ſimplicity were ſo little known

to the world, as that their pleaſures were thought romantic.

"The world," ſaid he, purſuing this train of thought, "ridicules a paſſion which it ſeldom feels; its ſcenes, and its intereſts, diſtract the mind, deprave the taſte, corrupt the heart, and love cannot exiſt in a heart that has loſt the meek dignity of innocence. Virtue and taſte are nearly the ſame, for virtue is little more than active taſte, and the moſt delicate affections of each combine in real love. How then are we to look for love in great cities, where ſelfiſhneſs, diſſipation, and inſincerity, ſupply the place of tenderneſs, ſimplicity and truth?"

It was near noon, when the travellers, having arrived at a piece of ſteep and dangerous road, alighted to walk. The road wound up an aſcent, that was clothed with wood, and, inſtead of following the carriage, they entered the refreſhing ſhade. A dewy coolneſs was diffuſed upon the air, which, with the bright verdure of turf, that grew under the trees, the mingled fragrance of

flowers

flowers and of balm, thyme, and lavender, that enriched it, and the grandeur of the pines, beech, and chesnuts, that overshadowed them, rendered this a most delicious retreat. Sometimes, the thick foliage excluded all view of the country; at others, it admitted some partial catches of the distant scenery, which gave hints to the imagination to picture landscapes more interesting, more impressive, than any that had been presented to the eye. The wanderers often lingered to indulge in these reveries of fancy.

The pauses of silence, such as had formerly interrupted the conversations of Valancourt and Emily, were more frequent today than ever. Valancourt often dropped suddenly from the most animating vivacity into fits of deep musing, and there was, sometimes, an unaffected melancholy in his smile, which Emily could not avoid understanding, for her heart was interested in the sentiment it spoke.

St. Aubert was refreshed by the shades, and they continued to saunter under them,

following,

following, as nearly as they could guefs, the direction of the road, till they perceived that they had totally loft it. They had continued near the brow of the precipice, allured by the ſcenery it exhibited, while the road wound far away over the cliff above. Valancourt called loudly to Michael, but heard no voice, except his own echoing among the rocks, and his various efforts to regain the road were equally unſuccefsful. While they were thus circumſtanced, they perceived a ſhepherd's cabin, between the boles of the trees at ſome diſtance, and Valancourt bounded on firſt to aſk aſſiſtance. When he reached it, he ſaw only two little children, at play, on the turf before the door. He looked into the hut, but no perſon was there, and the eldeſt of the boys told him that their father was with his flocks, and their mother was gone down into the vale, but would be back preſently. As he ſtood, conſidering what was further to be done, on a ſudden he heard Michael's voice roaring forth moſt manfully among the cliffs above,

till

till he made their echoes ring. Valancourt immediately anſwered the call, and endeavoured to make his way through the thicket that clothed the ſteeps, following the direction of the ſound. After much ſtruggle over brambles and precipices, he reached Michael, and at length prevailed with him to be ſilent, and to liſten to him. The road was at a conſiderable diſtance from the ſpot where St. Aubert and Emily were; the carriage could not eaſily return to the entrance of the wood; and, ſince it would be very fatiguing for St. Aubert to climb the long and ſteep road to the place where it now ſtood, Valancourt was anxious to find a more eaſy aſcent, by the way he had himſelf paſſed.

Meanwhile St. Aubert and Emily approached the cottage, and reſted themſelves on a ruſtic bench, faſtened between two pines, which overſhadowed it, till Valancourt, whoſe ſteps they had obſerved, ſhould return.

The eldeſt of the children deſiſted from his

his play, and ſtood ſtill to obſerve the ſtrangers, while the younger continued his little gambols, and teaſed his brother to join in them. St. Aubert looked with pleaſure upon this picture of infantine ſimplicity, till it brought to his remembrance his own boys, whom he had loſt about the age of theſe, and their lamented mother; and he ſunk into a thoughtfulneſs, which Emily obſerving, ſhe immediately began to ſing one of thoſe ſimple and lively airs he was ſo fond of, and which ſhe knew how to give with the moſt captivating ſweetneſs. St. Aubert ſmiled on her through his tears, took her hand and preſſed it affectionately, and then tried to diſſipate the melancholy reflections that lingered in his mind.

While ſhe ſung, Valancourt approached, who was unwilling to interrupt her, and pauſed at a little diſtance to liſten. When ſhe had concluded, he joined the party, and told them, that he had found Michael, as well as a way, by which he thought they could aſcend the cliff to the carriage. He

pointed

pointed to the woody ſteeps above, which St. Aubert ſurveyed with an anxious eye. He was already wearied by his walk, and this aſcent was formidable to him. He thought, however, it would be leſs toilſome than the long and broken road, and he determined to attempt it; but Emily, ever watchful of his eaſe, propoſing that he ſhould reſt, and dine before they proceeded further, Valancourt went to the carriage for the refreſhments depoſited there.

On his return, he propoſed removing a little higher up the mountain, to where the woods opened upon a grand and extenſive proſpect; and thither they were preparing to go, when they ſaw a young woman join the children, and careſs and weep over them.

The travellers, intereſted by her diſtreſs, ſtopped to obſerve her. She took the youngeſt of the children in her arms, and, perceiving the ſtrangers, haſtily dried her tears, and proceeded to the cottage. St. Aubert, on enquiring the occaſion of her ſorrow, learned that her huſband, who was a ſhepherd, and

lived

lived here in the ſummer months to watch over the flocks he led to feed upon theſe mountains, had loſt, on the preceding night, his little all. A gang of gipſies, who had for ſome time infeſted the neighbourhood, had driven away ſeveral of his maſter's ſheep. "Jacques," added the ſhepherd's wife, "had ſaved a little money, and had bought a few ſheep with it, and now they muſt go to his maſter for thoſe that are ſtolen; and what is worſe than all, his maſter, when he comes to know how it is, will truſt him no longer with the care of his flocks, for he is a hard man! and then what is to become of our children!"

The innocent countenance of the woman, and the ſimplicity of her manner in relating her grievance, inclined St. Aubert to believe her ſtory; and Valancourt, convinced that it was true, aſked eagerly what was the value of the ſtolen ſheep; on hearing which he turned away with a look of diſappointment. St. Aubert put ſome money into her hand, Emily too gave ſomething from her little purſe,

purſe, and they walked towards the cliff; but Valancourt lingered behind, and ſpoke to the ſhepherd's wife, who was now weeping with gratitude and ſurpriſe. He enquired how much money was yet wanting to replace the ſtolen ſheep, and found, that it was a ſum very little ſhort of all he had about him. He was perplexed and diſtreſſed. "This ſum then," ſaid he to himſelf, "would make this poor family completely happy—it is in my power to give it—to make them completely happy! But what is to become of me?—how ſhall I contrive to reach home with the little money that will remain?" For a moment he ſtood, unwilling to forego the luxury of raiſing a family from ruin to happineſs, yet conſidering the difficulties of purſuing his journey with ſo ſmall a ſum as would be left.

While he was in this ſtate of perplexity, the ſhepherd himſelf appeared: his children ran to meet him; he took one of them in his arms, and, with the other clinging to his

his coat, came forward with a loitering ſtep. His forlorn and melancholy look determined Valançourt at once; he threw down all the money he had, except a very few louis, and bounded away after St. Aubert and Emily, who were proceeding ſlowly up the ſteep. Valancourt had ſeldom felt his heart ſo light as at this moment; his gay ſpirits danced with pleaſure; every object around him appeared more intereſting, or beautiful, than before. St. Aubert obſerved the uncommon vivacity of his countenance: "What has pleaſed you ſo much?" ſaid he. "O what a lovely day," replied Valançourt, "how brightly the ſun ſhines, how pure is this air, what enchanting ſcenery!" "It is indeed enchanting," ſaid St. Aubert, whom early experience had taught to underſtand the nature of Valancourt's preſent feelings. "What pity that the wealthy, who can command ſuch ſunſhine, ſhould ever paſs their days in gloom—in the cold ſhade of ſelfiſhneſs! For you, my young friend, may the ſun always ſhine as bright-

ly

ly as at this moment; may your own conduct always give you the ſunſhine of benevolence and reaſon united!"

Valancourt, highly flattered by this compliment, could make no reply but by a ſmile of gratitude.

They continued to wind under the woods, between the graſſy knolls of the mountain, and, as they reached the ſhady ſummit, which he had pointed out, the whole party burſt into an exclamation. Behind the ſpot where they ſtood, the rock roſe perpendicularly in a maſſy wall to a conſiderable height, and then branched out into overhanging crags. Their grey tints were well contraſted by the bright hues of the plants and wild flowers, that grew in their fractured ſides, and were deepened by the gloom of the pines and cedars, that waved above. The ſteeps below, over which the eye paſſed abruptly to the valley, were fringed with thickets of alpine ſhrubs; and, lower ſtill, appeared the tufted tops of the cheſnut woods, that clothed their baſe, among which peeped forth the ſhepherd's

herd's cottage, juſt left by the travellers, with its blueiſh ſmoke curling high in the air. On every ſide appeared the majeſtic ſummits of the Pyrenées, ſome exhibiting tremendous crags of marble, whoſe appearance was changing every inſtant as the varying lights fell upon their ſurface; others, ſtill higher, diſplaying only ſnowy points, while their lower ſteeps were covered almoſt invariably with foreſts of pine, larch, and oak, that ſtretched down to the vale. This was one of the narrow vallies, that open from the Pyrenées into the country of Rouſillon, and whoſe green paſtures, and cultivated beauty, form a decided and wonderful contraſt to the romantic grandeur that environs it. Through a viſta of the mountains appeared the lowlands of Rouſillon, tinted with the blue haze of diſtance, as they united with the waters of the Mediterranean; where, on a promontory, which marked the boundary of the ſhore, ſtood a lonely beacon, over which were ſeen circling flights of ſea-fowl. Beyond, appeared, now and then, a

ſtealing ſail, white with the ſun-beam, and whoſe progreſs was perceivable by its approach to the light-houſe. Sometimes, too, was ſeen a ſail ſo diſtant, that it ſerved only to mark the line of ſeparation between the ſky and the waves.

On the other ſide of the valley, immediately oppoſite to the ſpot where the travellers reſted, a rocky paſs opened toward Gaſcony. Here no ſign of cultivation appeared. The rocks of granite, that ſcreened the glen, roſe abruptly from their baſe, and ſtretched their barren points to the clouds, unvaried with woods, and uncheered even by a hunter's cabin. Sometimes, indeed, a gigantic larch threw its long ſhade over the precipice, and here and there a cliff reared on its brow a monumental croſs, to tell the traveller the fate of him who had ventured thither before. This ſpot ſeemed the very haunt of banditti; and Emily, as ſhe looked down upon it, almoſt expected to ſee them ſtealing out from ſome hollow cave to look for their prey. Soon after an object

not

not leſs terrific ſtruck her,—a gibbet ſtanding on a point of rock near the entrance of the paſs, and immediately over one of the croſſes ſhe had before obſerved. Theſe were hieroglyphics that told a plain and dreadful ſtory. She forbore to point it out to St. Aubert, but it threw a gloom over her ſpirits, and made her anxious to haſten forward, that they might with certainty reach Rouſillon before night-fall. It was neceſſary, however, that St. Aubert ſhould take ſome refreſhment, and, ſeating themſelves on the ſhort dry turf, they opened the baſket of proviſions, while

. . . . . "a breezy murmurs cool'd,
Broad o'er *their* heads the verdant cedars wave,
And high palmetos lift their graceful ſhade."
. . . . . "*they* draw
Ethereal ſoul, their drink reviving gales
Profuſely breathing from the piney groves,
And vales of fragrance; there at diſtance hear
The roaring floods, and cataracts*."

St. Aubert was revived by reſt, and by the ſerene air of this ſummit; and Valan-

* THOMSON.

court

court was so charmed with all around, and with the conversation of his companions, that he seemed to have forgotten he had any further to go. Having concluded their simple repast, they gave a long farewell look to the scene, and again began to ascend. St. Aubert rejoiced when he reached the carriage, which Emily entered with him; but Valancourt, willing to take a more extensive view of the enchanting country, into which they were about to descend, than he could do from a carriage, loosened his dogs, and once more bounded with them along the banks of the road. He often quitted it for points that promised a wider prospect; and the slow pace, at which the mules travelled, allowed him to overtake them with ease. Whenever a scene of uncommon magnificence appeared, he hastened to inform St. Aubert, who, though he was too much tired to walk himself, sometimes made the chaise wait, while Emily went to the neighbouring cliff.

It was evening when they descended the

lower alps, that bind Rouſillon, and form a majeſtic barrier round that charming country, leaving it open only on the eaſt to the Mediterranean. The gay tints of cultivation once more beautified the landſcape; for the lowlands were coloured with the richeſt hues, which a luxuriant climate and an induſtrious people can awaken into life. Groves of orange and lemon perfumed the air, their ripe fruit glowing among the foliage; while, ſloping to the plains, extenſive vineyards ſpread their treaſures. Beyond theſe, woods and paſtures, and mingled towns and hamlets ſtretched towards the ſea, on whoſe bright ſurface gleamed many a diſtant ſail; while, over the whole ſcene, was diffuſed the purple glow of evening. This landſcape with the ſurrounding alps did, indeed, preſent a perfect picture of the lovely and the ſublime, of "beauty ſleeping in the lap of horror."

The travellers, having reached the plains, proceeded, between hedges of flowering myrtle and pomegranate, to the town of Arles,

Arles, where they purpoſed to reſt for the night. They met with ſimple, but neat accommodation, and would have paſſed an happy evening, after the toils and the delights of this day, had not the approaching ſeparation thrown a gloom over their ſpirits. It was St. Aubert's plan to proceed, on the morrow, to the borders of the Mediterranean, and travel along its ſhores into Languedoc; and Valancourt, ſince he was now nearly recovered, and had no longer a pretence for continuing with his new friends, reſolved to leave them here. St. Aubert, who was much pleaſed with him, invited him to go further, but did not repeat the invitation; and Valancourt had reſolution enough to forego the temptation of accepting it, that he might prove himſelf not unworthy of the favour. On the following morning, therefore, they were to part; St. Aubert to purſue his way to Languedoc, and Valancourt to explore new ſcenes among the mountains, on his return home. During this evening he was often

ſilent and thoughtful; St. Aubert's manner towards him was affectionate, though grave, and Emily was ſerious, though ſhe made frequent efforts to appear cheerful. After one of the moſt melancholy evenings they had yet paſſed together, they ſeparated for the night.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

"I care not, Fortune! what you me deny;
You cannot rob me of free nature's grace;
You cannot ſhut the windows of the ſky,
Through which Aurora ſhews her brightening face;
You cannot bar my conſtant feet to trace
The woods and lawns, by living ſtream at eve:
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave:
Of fancy, reaſon, virtue, nought can me bereave."

THOMSON.

IN the morning, Valancourt breakfaſted with St. Aubert and Emily, neither of whom ſeemed much refreſhed by ſleep. The languor of illneſs ſtill hung over St. Aubert, and to Emily's fears his diſorder appeared to be increaſing faſt upon him. She watched his looks with anxious affection, and their expreſſion was always faithfully reflected in her own.

At the commencement of their acquaintance, Valancourt had made known his name and family. St. Aubert was not a ſtranger to either, for the family eſtates, which were now in the poſſeſſion of an elder brother of Valancourt, were little more than twenty miles diſtant from La Vallée, and he had ſometimes met the elder Valancourt on viſits in the neighbourhood. This knowledge had made him more willingly receive his preſent companion; for, though his countenance and manners would have won him the acquaintance of St. Aubert, who was very apt to truſt to the intelligence of his own eyes, with reſpect to countenances, he would not have accepted theſe, as ſufficient introductions to that of his daughter.

The breakfaſt was almoſt as ſilent as the ſupper of the preceding night; but their muſing was at length interrupted by the ſound of the carriage wheels, which were to bear away St. Aubert and Emily. Valancourt ſtarted from his chair, and went to the window; it was indeed the carriage,

and

and he returned to his ſeat without ſpeaking. The moment was now come when they muſt part. St. Aubert told Valancourt, that he hoped he would never paſs La Vallée without favouring him with a viſit; and Valancourt, eagerly thanking him, aſſured him that he never would; as he ſaid which he looked timidly at Emily, who tried to ſmile away the ſerioufneſs of her ſpirits. They paſſed a few minutes in intereſting converſation, and St. Aubert then led the way to the carriage, Emily and Valancourt following in ſilence. The latter lingered at the door ſeveral minutes after they were ſeated, and none of the party ſeemed to have courage enough to ſay—Farewell. At length, St. Aubert pronounced the melancholy word, which Emily paſſed to Valancourt, who returned it, with a dejected ſmile, and the carriage drove on.

The travellers remained, for ſome time, in a ſtate of tranquil penſiveneſs, which is not unpleaſing. St. Aubert interrupted it by obſerving, "This is a very promiſing

young man; it is many years ſince I have been ſo much pleaſed with any perſon, on ſo ſhort an acquaintance. He brings back to my memory the days of my youth, when every ſcene was new and delightful!" St. Aubert ſighed, and ſunk again into a reverie; and, as Emily looked back upon the road they had paſſed, Valancourt was ſeen, at the door of the little inn, following them with his eyes. He perceived her, and waved his hand; and ſhe returned the adieu, till the winding road ſhut her from his ſight.

"I remember when I was about his age," reſumed St. Aubert, "and I thought, and felt exactly as he does. The world was opening upon me then, now—it is cloſing."

"My dear ſir, do not think ſo gloomily," ſaid Emily in a trembling voice, "I hope you have many, many years to live—for your own ſake—for *my* ſake."

"Ah, my Emily!" replied St. Aubert, "for thy ſake! Well—I hope it is ſo." He wiped away a tear, that was ſtealing down

down his cheek, threw a ſmile upon his countenance, and ſaid in a cheering voice, "There is ſomething in the ardour and ingenuouſneſs of youth, which is particularly pleaſing to the contemplation of an old man, if his feelings have not been entirely corroded by the world. It is cheering and reviving, like the view of ſpring to a ſick perſon; his mind catches ſomewhat of the ſpirit of the ſeaſon, and his eyes are lighted up with a tranſient ſun-ſhine. Valancourt is this ſpring to me."

Emily, who preſſed her father's hand affectionately, had never before liſtened with ſo much pleaſure to the praiſes he beſtowed; no, not even when he had beſtowed them on herſelf.

They travelled on, among vineyards, woods, and paſtures, delighted with the romantic beauty of the landſcape, which was bounded, on one ſide, by the grandeur of the Pyrenées, and, on the other, by the ocean; and, ſoon after noon, they reached the town of Colioure, ſituated on the Me-

diterranean. Here they dined, and reſted till towards the cool of day, when they purſued their way along the ſhores—thoſe enchanting ſhores! which extend to Languedoc. Emily gazed with enthuſiaſm on the vaſtneſs of the ſea, its ſurface varying, as the lights and ſhadows fell, and on its woody banks mellowed with autumnal tints.

St. Aubert was impatient to reach Perpignan, where he expected letters from M. Queſnel; and it was the expectation of theſe letters, that had induced him to leave Colioure, for his feeble frame had required immediate reſt. After travelling a few miles, he fell aſleep; and Emily, who had put two or three books into the carriage, on leaving La Vallée, had now the leiſure for looking into them. She ſought for one, in which Valancourt had been reading the day before, and hoped for the pleaſure of re-tracing a page, over which the eyes of a beloved friend had lately paſſed, of dwelling on the paſſages, which he had admired, and

and of permitting them to ſpeak to her in the language of his own mind, and to bring himſelf to her preſence. On ſearching for the book, ſhe could find it no where, but in its ſtead perceived a volume of Petrarch's poems, that had belonged to Valancourt, whoſe name was written in it, and from which he had frequently read paſſages to her, with all the pathetic expreſſion, that characterized the feelings of the author. She heſitated in believing, what would have been ſufficiently apparent to almoſt any other perſon, that he had purpoſely left this book, inſtead of the one ſhe had loſt, and that love had prompted the exchange; but, having opened it with impatient pleaſure, and obſerved the lines of his pencil drawn along the various paſſages he had read aloud, and under others more deſcriptive of delicate tenderneſs than he had dared to truſt his voice with, the conviction came, at length, to her mind. For ſome moments ſhe was conſcious only of being beloved; then, a recollection of all the variations of

tone and countenance, with which he had recited theſe ſonnets, and of the ſoul, which ſpoke in their expreſſion, preſſed to her memory, and ſhe wept over the memorial of his affection.

They arrived at Perpignan ſoon after ſunſet, where St. Aubert found, as he had expected, letters from M. Queſnel, the contents of which ſo evidently and grievouſly affected him, that Emily was alarmed, and preſſed him, as far as her delicacy would permit, to diſcloſe the occaſion of his concern; but he anſwered her only by tears, and immediately began to talk on other topics. Emily, though ſhe forbore to preſs the one moſt intereſting to her, was greatly affected by her father's manner, and paſſed a night of ſleepleſs ſolicitude.

In the morning they purſued their journey along the coaſt towards Leucate, another town on the Mediterranean, ſituated on the borders of Languedoc and Rouſſillon. On the way, Emily renewed the ſubject of the preceding night, and appeared

peared ſo deeply affected by St. Aubert's ſilence and dejection, that he relaxed from his reſerve. "I was unwilling, my dear Emily," ſaid he, "to throw a cloud over the pleaſure you receive from theſe ſcenes, and meant, therefore, to conceal, for the preſent, ſome circumſtances, with which, however, you muſt at length have been made acquainted. But your anxiety has defeated my purpoſe; you ſuffer as much from this, perhaps, as you will do from a knowledge of the facts I have to relate. M. Queſnel's viſit proved an unhappy one to me; he came to tell me a part of the news he has now confirmed. You may have heard me mention a M. Motteville, of Paris, but you did not know that the chief of my perſonal property was inveſted in his hands. I had great confidence in him, and I am yet willing to believe, that he is not wholly unworthy of my eſteem. A variety of circumſtances have concurred to ruin him, and—I am ruined with him."

St.

St. Aubert paused, to conceal his emotion.

"The letters I have just received from M. Quesnel," resumed he, struggling to speak with firmness, "enclosed others from Motteville, which confirmed all I dreaded."

"Must we then quit La Vallée?" said Emily, after a long pause of silence. "That is yet uncertain," replied St. Aubert, "it will depend upon the compromise Motteville is able to make with his creditors. My income, you know, was never large, and now it will be reduced to little indeed! It is for you, Emily, for you, my child, that I am most afflicted." His last words faltered; Emily smiled tenderly upon him through her tears, and then, endeavouring to overcome her emotion, "My dear father," said she, "do not grieve for me, or for yourself; we may yet be happy;—if La Vallée remains for us, we must be happy. We will retain only one servant, and you shall scarcely perceive the change in

in your income. Be comforted, my dear ſir; we ſhall not feel the want of thoſe luxuries, which others value ſo highly, ſince we never had a taſte for them; and poverty cannot deprive us of many conſolations. It cannot rob us of the affection we have for each other, or degrade us in our own opinion, or in that of any perſon, whoſe opinion we ought to value."

St. Aubert concealed his face with his handkerchief, and was unable to ſpeak: but Emily continued to urge to her father the truths, which himſelf had impreſſed upon her mind.

"Beſides, my dear ſir, poverty cannot deprive us of intellectual delights. It cannot deprive you of the comfort of affording me examples of fortitude and benevolence; nor me of the delight of conſoling a beloved parent. It cannot deaden our taſte for the grand, and the beautiful, or deny us the means of indulging it; for the ſcenes of nature—thoſe ſublime ſpectacles, ſo infinitely ſuperior to all artificial luxuries! are open

for

for the enjoyment of the poor, as well as of the rich. Of what, then, have we to complain, ſo long as we are not in want of neceſſaries? Pleaſures, ſuch as wealth cannot buy, will ſtill be ours. We retain, then, the ſublime luxuries of nature, and loſe only the frivolous ones of art."

St. Aubert could not reply; he caught Emily to his boſom, their tears flowed together, but—they were not tears of ſorrow. After this language of the heart, all other would have been feeble, and they remained ſilent for ſome time. Then St. Aubert converſed as before; for, if his mind had not recovered its natural tranquillity, it at leaſt aſſumed the appearance of it.

They reached the romantic town of Leucate early in the day, but St. Aubert was weary, and they determined to paſs the night there. In the evening, he exerted himſelf ſo far as to walk with his daughter to view the environs that overlook the lake of Leucate, the Mediterranean, part of Rouſillon,

ſillon, with the Pyrenées, and a wide extent of the luxuriant province of Languedoc, now bluſhing with the ripened vintage, which the peaſants were beginning to gather. St. Aubert and Emily ſaw the buſy groups, caught the joyous ſong, that was wafted on the breeze, and anticipated, with apparent pleaſure, their next day's journey over this gay region. He deſigned, however, ſtill to wind along the ſea-ſhore. To return home immediately was partly his wiſh, but from this he was with-held by a deſire to lengthen the pleaſure, which the journey gave his daughter, and to try the effect of the ſea air on his own diſorder.

On the following day, therefore, they recommenced their journey through Languedoc, winding the ſhores of the Mediterranean; the Pyrenées ſtill forming the magnificent back-ground of their proſpects, while on their right was the ocean, and, on their left, wide extended plains melting into the blue horizon. St. Aubert was pleaſed, and converſed much with Emily; yet

yet his cheerfulneſs was ſometimes artificial, and ſometimes a ſhade of melancholy would ſteal upon his countenance, and betray him. This was ſoon chaſed away by Emily's ſmile; who ſmiled, however, with an aching heart, for ſhe ſaw that his misfortunes preyed upon his mind, and upon his enfeebled frame.

It was evening when they reached a ſmall village of Upper Languedoc, where they meant to paſs the night, but the place could not afford them beds; for here, too, it was the time of the vintage, and they were obliged to proceed to the next poſt. The languor of illneſs and of fatigue, which returned upon St. Aubert, required immediate repoſe, and the evening was now far advanced; but from neceſſity there was no appeal, and he ordered Michael to proceed.

The rich plains of Languedoc, which exhibited all the glories of the vintage, with the gaieties of a French feſtival, no longer awakened St. Aubert to pleaſure, whoſe

condition

condition formed a mournful contraſt to the hilarity and youthful beauty which ſurrounded him. As his languid eyes moved over the ſcene, he conſidered, that they would ſoon, perhaps, be cloſed for ever on this world. "Thoſe diſtant and ſublime mountains," ſaid he ſecretly, as he gazed on a chain of the Pyrenées that ſtretched towards the weſt, "theſe luxuriant plains, this blue vault, the cheerful light of day, will be ſhut from my eyes! The ſong of the peaſant, the cheering voice of man—will no longer ſound for me!"

The intelligent eyes of Emily ſeemed to read what paſſed in the mind of her father, and ſhe fixed them on his face, with an expreſſion of ſuch tender pity, as recalled his thoughts from every deſultory object of regret, and he remembered only, that he muſt leave his daughter without protection. This reflection changed regret to agony; he ſighed deeply, and remained ſilent, while ſhe ſeemed to underſtand that ſigh, for ſhe preſſed

preſſed his hand affectionately, and then turned to the window to conceal her tears. The ſun now threw a laſt yellow gleam on the waves of the Mediterranean, and the gloom of twilight ſpread faſt over the ſcene, till only a melancholy ray appeared on the weſtern horizon, marking the point where the ſun had ſet amid the vapours of an autumnal evening. A cool breeze now came from the ſhore, and Emily let down the glaſs; but the air, which was refreſhing to health, was as chilling to ſickneſs, and St. Aubert deſired, that the window might be drawn up. Increaſing illneſs made him now more anxious than ever to finiſh the day's journey, and he ſtopped the muleteer to enquire how far they had yet to go to the next poſt. He replied, Nine miles. "I feel I am unable to proceed much further," ſaid St. Aubert; "enquire, as you go, if there is any houſe on the road that would accommodate us for the night." He ſunk back in the carriage, and Michael, cracking his whip in the air, ſet off, and continued on

on the full gallop, till St. Aubert, almoſt fainting, called to him to ſtop. Emily looked anxiouſly from the window, and ſaw a peaſant walking at ſome little diſtance on the road, for whom they waited, till he came up, when he was aſked, if there was any houſe in the neighbourhood that accommodated travellers. He replied, that he knew of none. "There is a chateau, indeed, among thoſe woods on the right," added he, "but I believe it receives nobody, and I cannot ſhew you the way, for I am almoſt a ſtranger here." St. Aubert was going to aſk him ſome further queſtion concerning the chateau, but the man abruptly paſſed on. After ſome conſideration, he ordered Michael to proceed ſlowly to the woods. Every moment now deepened the twilight, and increaſed the difficulty of finding the road. Another peaſant ſoon after paſſed. "Which is the way to the chateau in the woods?" cried Michael.

"The chateau in the woods!" exclaimed

the

the peaſant, " Do you mean that, with the turret, yonder ?"

" I don't know as for the turret, as you call it," ſaid Michael, " I mean that white piece of a building, that we ſee at a diſtance there, among the trees."

" Yes, that is the turret; why, who are you, that you are going thither ?" ſaid the man with ſurpriſe.

St. Aubert, on hearing this odd queſtion, and obſerving the peculiar tone in which it was delivered, looked out from the carriage. " We are travellers," ſaid he, " who are in ſearch of a houſe of accommodation for the night; is there any hereabout ?"

" None, Monſieur, unleſs you have a mind to try your luck yonder," replied the peaſant, pointing to the woods, " but I would not adviſe you to go there."

" To whom does the chateau belong ?"

" I ſcarcely know myſelf, Monſieur."

" It is uninhabited, then." " No, not uninhabited; the ſteward and houſekeeper are there, I believe."

On hearing this, St. Aubert determined to proceed to the chateau, and riſque the refuſal of being accommodated for the night; he therefore deſired the countryman would ſhew Michael the way, and bade him expect reward for his trouble. The man was for a moment ſilent, and then ſaid, that he was going on other buſineſs, but that the road could not be miſſed, if they went up an avenue to the right, to which he pointed. St. Aubert was going to ſpeak, but the peaſant wiſhed him good night, and walked on.

The carriage now moved towards the avenue, which was guarded by a gate; and Michael having diſmounted to open it, they entered between rows of antient oak and cheſnut, whoſe intermingled branches formed a lofty arch above. There was ſomething ſo gloomy and deſolate in the appearance of this avenue, and its lonely ſilence, that Emily almoſt ſhuddered as ſhe paſſed along, and, recollecting the manner in which the peaſant had mentioned the chateau,

chateau, ſhe gave a myſterious meaning to his words, ſuch as ſhe had not ſuſpected when he uttered them. Theſe apprehenſions, however, ſhe tried to check, conſidering that they were probably the effect of a melancholy imagination, which her father's ſituation, and a conſideration of her own circumſtances, had made ſenſible to every impreſſion.

They paſſed ſlowly on, for they were now almoſt in darkneſs, which, together with the unevenneſs of the ground, and the frequent roots of old trees, that ſhot up above the ſoil, made it neceſſary to proceed with caution. On a ſudden Michael ſtopped the carriage; and, as St. Aubert looked from the window to enquire the cauſe, he perceived a figure at ſome diſtance moving up the avenue. The duſk would not permit him to diſtinguiſh what it was, but he bade Michael go on.

"This ſeems a ſtrange wild place," ſaid Michael; "there is no houſe hereabout,

don't

don't your honour think we had better turn back?"

"Go a little further, and if we ſee no houſe then, we will return to the road," replied St. Aubert.

Michael proceeded with reluctance, and the extreme ſlowneſs of his pace made St. Aubert look again from the window to haſten him, when again he ſaw the ſame figure. He was ſomewhat ſtartled: probably the gloomineſs of the ſpot made him more liable to alarm than uſual; however this might be, he now ſtopped Michael, and bade him call to the perſon in the avenue.

"Pleaſe your honour, he may be a robber," ſaid Michael. "It does not pleaſe me," replied St. Aubert, who could not forbear ſmiling at the ſimplicity of his phraſe, "and we will, therefore, return to the road, for I ſee no probability of meeting here with what we ſeek."

Michael turned about immediately, and was retracing his way with alacrity, when a voice was heard from among the trees on

the left. It was not the voice of command, or diſtreſs, but a deep hollow tone, which ſeemed to be ſcarcely human. The man whipped his mules till they went as faſt as poſſible, regardleſs of the darkneſs, the broken ground, and the necks of the whole party, nor once ſtopped till he reached the gate, which opened from the avenue into the high road, where he went into a more moderate pace.

"I am very ill," ſaid St. Aubert, taking his daughter's hand. "You are worſe, then, ſir!" ſaid Emily, extremely alarmed by his manner, "you are worſe, and here is no aſſiſtance. Good God! what is to be done!" He leaned his head on her ſhoulder, while ſhe endeavoured to ſupport him with her arm, and Michael was again ordered to ſtop. When the rattling of the wheels had ceaſed, muſic was heard on the air; it was to Emily the voice of Hope. "Oh! we are near ſome human habitation!" ſaid ſhe, "help may ſoon be had."

She

She liſtened anxiouſly; the ſounds were diſtant, and ſeemed to come from a remote part of the woods that bordered the road; and, as ſhe looked towards the ſpot whence they iſſued, ſhe perceived in the faint moon-light ſomething like a chateau. It was difficult, however, to reach this; St. Aubert was now too ill to bear the motion of the carriage; Michael could not quit his mules; and Emily, who ſtill ſupported her father, feared to leave him, and alſo feared to venture alone to ſuch a diſtance, ſhe knew not whither, or to whom. Something, however, it was neceſſary to determine upon immediately; St. Aubert, therefore, told Michael to proceed ſlowly; but they had not gone far, when he fainted, and the carriage was again ſtopped. He lay quite ſenſeleſs.—"My dear, dear father," cried Emily in great agony, and who began to fear that he was dying, "ſpeak, if it is only one word to let me hear the ſound of your voice!" But no voice ſpoke in reply. In an agony of terror ſhe bade

Michael bring water from the rivulet, that flowed along the road; and, having received ſome in the man's hat, with trembling hands ſhe ſprinkled it over her father's face, which, as the moon's rays now fell upon it, ſeemed to bear the impreſſion of death. Every emotion of ſelfiſh fear now gave way to a ſtronger influence; and, committing St. Aubert to the care of Michael, who refuſed to go far from his mules, ſhe ſtepped from the carriage in ſearch of the chateau ſhe had ſeen at a diſtance. It was a ſtill moon-light night, and the muſic, which yet ſounded on the air, directed her ſteps from the high road, up a ſhadowy lane, that led to the woods. Her mind was for ſome time ſo entirely occupied by anxiety and terror for her father, that ſhe felt none for herſelf, till the deepening gloom of the over-hanging foliage, which now wholly excluded the moon-light, and the wildneſs of the place, recalled her to a ſenſe of her adventurous ſituation. The muſic had ceaſed, and ſhe had no guide but chance. For a moment

ſhe

ſhe pauſed in terrified perplexity, till a ſenſe of her father's condition again overcoming every conſideration for herſelf, ſhe proceeded. The lane terminated in the woods, but ſhe looked round in vain for a houſe, or a human being, and as vainly liſtened for a ſound to guide her. She hurried on, however, not knowing whither, avoiding the receſſes of the woods, and endeavouring to keep along their margin, till a rude kind of avenue, which opened upon a moon-light ſpot, arreſted her attention. The wildneſs of this avenue brought to her recollection the one leading to the turreted chateau, and ſhe was inclined to believe, that this was a part of the ſame domain, and probably led to the ſame point. While ſhe heſitated, whether to follow it or not, a ſound of many voices in loud merriment burſt upon her ear. It ſeemed not the laugh of cheerfulneſs, but of riot, and ſhe ſtood appalled. While ſhe pauſed, ſhe heard a diſtant voice calling from the way ſhe had come, and, not doubting but it was that of Michael, her firſt impulſe

was to haſten back; but a ſecond thought changed her purpoſe; ſhe believed that nothing leſs than the laſt extremity could have prevailed with Michael to quit his mules, and fearing that her father was now dying, ſhe ruſhed forward, with a feeble hope of obtaining aſſiſtance from the people in the woods. Her heart beat with fearful expectation, as ſhe drew near the ſpot whence the voices iſſued, and ſhe often ſtartled when her ſteps diſturbed the fallen leaves. The ſounds led her towards the moon-light glade ſhe had before noticed; at a little diſtance from which ſhe ſtopped, and ſaw, between the boles of the trees, a ſmall circular level of green turf, ſurrounded by the woods, on which appeared a group of figures. On drawing nearer, ſhe diſtinguiſhed theſe, by their dreſs, to be peaſants, and perceived ſeveral cottages ſcattered round the edge of the woods, which waved loftily over this ſpot. While ſhe gazed, and endeavoured to overcome the apprehenſions that withheld her ſteps, ſeveral peaſant girls came out

out of a cottage; muſic inſtantly ſtruck up, and the dance began. It was the joyous muſic of the vintage! the ſame ſhe had before heard upon the air. Her heart, occupied with terror for her father, could not feel the contraſt, which this gay ſcene offered to her own diſtreſs; ſhe ſtepped haſtily forward towards a group of elder peaſants, who were ſeated at the door of a cottage, and, having explained her ſituation, entreated their aſſiſtance. Several of them roſe with alacrity, and, offering any ſervice in their power, followed Emily, who ſeemed to move on the wind, as faſt as they could towards the road.

When ſhe reached the carriage, ſhe found St. Aubert reſtored to animation. On the recovery of his ſenſes, having heard from Michael whither his daughter was gone, anxiety for her overcame every regard for himſelf, and he had ſent him in ſearch of her. He was, however, ſtill languid, and, perceiving himſelf unable to travel much further, he renewed his enquiries for an

inn, and concerning the chateau in the woods. "The chateau cannot accommodate you, ſir," ſaid a venerable peaſant who had followed Emily from the woods, "it is ſcarcely inhabited; but, if you will do me the honour to viſit my cottage, you ſhall be welcome to the beſt bed it affords."

St. Aubert was himſelf a Frenchman; he, therefore, was not ſurpriſed at French courteſy; but, ill as he was, he felt the value of the offer enhanced, by the manner which accompanied it. He had too much delicacy to apologize, or to appear to heſitate about availing himſelf of the peaſant's hoſpitality, but immediately accepted it with the ſame frankneſs with which it was offered.

The carriage again moved ſlowly on; Michael following the peaſants up the lane, which Emily had juſt quitted, till they came to the moon light glade. St. Aubert's ſpirits were ſo far reſtored by the courteſy of his hoſt, and the near proſpect of repoſe, that he looked with a ſweet complacency upon the

the moon-light ſcene, ſurrounded by the ſhadowy woods, through which, here and there, an opening admitted the ſtreaming ſplendour, diſcovering a cottage, or a ſparkling rivulet. He liſtened, with no painful emotion, to the merry notes of the guitar and tamborine; and, though tears came to his eyes, when he ſaw the *debonnaire* dance of the peaſants, they were not merely tears of mournful regret. With Emily it was otherwiſe; immediate terror for her father had now ſubſided into a gentle melancholy, which every note of joy, by awakening compariſon, ſerved to heighten.

The dance ceaſed on the approach of the carriage, which was a phenomenon in theſe ſequeſtered woods, and the peaſantry flocked round it with eager curioſity. On learning that it brought a ſick ſtranger, ſeveral girls ran acroſs the turf, and returned with wine and baſkets of grapes, which they preſented to the travellers, each with kind contention preſſing for a preference. At length, the carriage ſtopped at a neat cottage,

and his venerable conductor, having assisted St. Aubert to alight, led him and Emily to a small inner room illumined only by moon-beams, which the open casement admitted. St. Aubert, rejoicing in rest, seated himself in an arm chair, and his senses were refreshed by the cool and balmy air, that lightly waved the embowering honeysuckles, and wafted their sweet breath into the apartment. His host, who was called La Voisin, quitted the room, but soon returned with fruits, cream, and all the pastoral luxury his cottage afforded; having set down which, with a smile of unfeigned welcome, he retired behind the chair of his guest. St. Aubert insisted on his taking a seat at the table; and, when the fruit had allayed the fever of his palate, and he found himself somewhat revived, he began to converse with his host, who communicated several particulars concerning himself and his family, which were interesting, because they were spoken from the heart, and delineated a picture of the sweet courtesies

of

of family kindneſs. Emily ſat by her father, holding his hand, and while ſhe liſtened to the old man, her heart ſwelled with the affectionate ſympathy he deſcribed, and her tears fell to the mournful conſideration that death would probably ſoon deprive her of the deareſt bleſſing ſhe then poſſeſſed. The ſoft moon-light of an autumnal evening, and the diſtant muſic, which now ſounded a plaintive ſtrain, aided the melancholy of her mind. The old man continued to talk of his family, and St. Aubert remained ſilent. "I have only one daughter living," ſaid La Voiſin, "but ſhe is happily married, and is every thing to me. When I loſt my wife," he added with a ſigh, "I came to live with Agnes, and her family; ſhe has ſeveral children, who are all dancing on the green yonder, as merry as graſshoppers—and long may they be ſo! I hope to die among them, monſieur. I am old now, and cannot expect to live long, but there is ſome comfort in dying ſurrounded by one's children."

"My good friend," ſaid St. Aubert, while his voice trembled, "I hope you will long live ſurrounded by them."

"Ah, ſir! at my age I muſt not expect that!" replied the old man, and he paſed: "I can ſcarcely wiſh it," he reſumed, "for I truſt that whenever I die I ſhall go to heaven, where my poor wife is gone before me. I can ſometimes almoſt fancy I ſee her of a ſtill moon-light night walking among theſe ſhades ſhe loved ſo well. Do you believe, monſieur, that we ſhall be permitted to reviſit the earth, after we have quitted the body?"

Emily could no longer ſtifle the anguiſh of her heart; her tears fell faſt upon her father's hand, which ſhe yet held. He made an effort to ſpeak, and at length ſaid in a low voice, "I hope we ſhall be permitted to look down on thoſe we have left on the earth, but I can only hope it. Futurity is much veiled from our eyes, and faith and hope are our only guides concerning it. We are not enjoined to believe, that diſem-

diſembodied ſpirits watch over the friends they have loved, but we may innocently hope it. It is a hope which I will never reſign," continued he, while he wiped the tears from his daughter's eyes, "it will ſweeten the bitter moments of death!" Tears fell ſlowly on his cheeks; La Voiſin wept too, and there was a pauſe of ſilence. Then, La Voiſin, renewing the ſubject, ſaid, "But you believe, ſir, that we ſhall meet in another world the relations we have loved in this; I muſt believe this." "Then do believe it," replied St. Aubert: "ſevere, indeed, would be the pangs of ſeparation, if we believed it to be eternal. Look up, my dear Emily, we ſhall meet again!" He lifted his eyes towards heaven, and a gleam of moon-light, which fell upon his countenance, diſcovered peace and reſignation, ſtealing on the lines of ſorrow.

La Voiſin felt that he had purſued the ſubject too far, and he dropped it, ſaying, "We are in darkneſs, I forgot to bring a light."

"No," ſaid St. Aubert, "this is a light I love.

I love. Sit down, my good friend. Emily, my love, I find myſelf better than I have been all day; this air refreſhes me. I can enjoy this tranquil hour, and that muſic, which floats ſo ſweetly at a diſtance. Let me ſee you ſmile. Who touches that guitar ſo taſtefully? are there two inſtruments, or is it an echo I hear?"

"It is an echo, monſieur, I fancy. That guitar is often heard at night, when all is ſtill, but nobody knows who touches it, and it is ſometimes accompanied by a voice ſo ſweet, and ſo ſad, one would almoſt think the woods were haunted." "They certainly are haunted," ſaid St. Aubert with a ſmile, "but I believe it isby mortals." "I have ſometimes heard it at midnight, when I could not ſleep," rejoined La Voiſin, not ſeeming to notice this remark, "almoſt under my window, and I never heard any muſic like it. It has often made me think of my poor wife till I cried. I have ſometimes got up to the window to look if I could ſee any body, but

as

as ſoon as I opened the caſement all was huſhed, and nobody to be ſeen; and I have liſtened, and liſtened till I have been ſo timorous, that even the trembling of the leaves in the breeze has made me ſtart. They ſay it often comes to warn people of their death, but I have heard it theſe many years, and outlived the warning."

Emily, though ſhe ſmiled at the mention of this ridiculous ſuperſtition, could not, in the preſent tone of her ſpirits, wholly reſiſt its contagion.

"Well, but, my good friend," ſaid St. Aubert, "has nobody had courage to follow the ſounds? If they had, they would probably have diſcovered who is the muſician." "Yes, ſir, they have followed them ſome way into the woods, but the muſic has ſtill retreated, and ſeemed as diſtant as ever, and the people have at laſt been afraid of being led into harm, and would go no further. It is very ſeldom that I have heard theſe ſounds ſo early in the evening. They uſually come about midnight, when that bright planet, which

which is riſing above the turret yonder, ſets below the woods on the left."

"What turret?" aſked St. Aubert with quickneſs, "I ſee none."

"Your pardon, monſieur, you do ſee one indeed, for the moon ſhines full upon it;—up the avenue yonder, a long way off; the chateau it belongs to is hid among the trees."

"Yes, my dear ſir," ſaid Emily pointing, "don't you ſee ſomething glitter above the dark woods? It is a fane, I fancy, which the rays fall upon."

"O yes, I ſee what you mean; and whom does the chateau belong to?"

"The Marquis de Villeroi was its owner," replied La Voiſin, emphatically.

"Ah!" ſaid St. Aubert with a deep ſigh, "are we then ſo near Le-Blanc!" He appeared much agitated.

"It uſed to be the Marquis's favourite reſidence," reſumed La Voiſin, "but he took a diſlike to the place, and has not been there for many years. We have heard lately

lately that he is dead, and that it is fallen into other hands." St. Aubert, who had ſat in deep muſing, was rouſed by the laſt words. "Dead!" he exclaimed, "Good God! when did he die?"

"He is reported to have died about five weeks ſince," replied La Voiſin. "Did you know the Marquis, ſir?"

"This is very extraordinary!" ſaid St. Aubert without attending to the queſtion. "Why is it ſo, my dear ſir?" ſaid Emily, in a voice of timid curioſity. He made no reply, but ſunk again into a reverie; and in a few moments, when he ſeemed to have recovered himſelf, aſked who had ſucceeded to the eſtates. "I have forgot his title, monſieur," ſaid La Voiſin; "but my lord reſides at Paris chiefly; I hear no talk of his coming hither."

"The chateau is ſhut up then, ſtill?"

"Why, little better, ſir; the old houſekeeper, and her huſband the ſteward, have the care of it, but they live generally in a cottage hard by."

"The

"The chateau is ſpacious, I ſuppoſe," ſaid Emily, "and muſt be deſolate for the reſidence of only two perſons."

"Deſolate enough, mademoiſelle," replied La Voiſin, "I would not paſs one night in the chateau, for the value of the whole domain."

"What is that?" ſaid St. Aubert, rouſed again from thoughtfulneſs. As his hoſt repeated his laſt ſentence, a groan eſcaped from St. Aubert, and then, as if anxious to prevent it from being noticed, he haſtily aſked La Voiſin how long he had lived in this neighbourhood. "Almoſt from my childhood, ſir," replied his hoſt.

"You remember the late marchioneſs, then?" ſaid St. Aubert in an altered voice.

"Ah, monſieur!—that I do well. There are many beſide me who remember her."

"Yes—" ſaid St. Aubert, "and I am one of thoſe."

"Alas, ſir! you remember, then, a moſt beautiful and excellent lady. She deſerved a better fate."

Tears

Tears ſtood in St. Aubert's eyes;—"Enough," ſaid he in a voice almoſt ſtifled by the violence of his emotions,—"it is enough, my friend."

Emily, though extremely ſurpriſed by her father's manner, forbore to expreſs her feelings by any queſtion. La Voiſin began to apologize, but St. Aubert interrupted him; "Apology is quite unneceſſary," ſaid he, "let us change the topic. You was ſpeaking of the muſic we juſt now heard."

"I was, monſieur,—but hark!—it comes again; liſten to that voice!" They were all ſilent;

"At laſt a ſoft and ſolemn-breathing ſound
Roſe, like a ſtream of rich diſtilled perfumes,
And ſtole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere ſhe was 'ware, and wiſhed ſhe might
Deny her nature, and benever more
Still, to be ſo diſplaced *."

In a few moments the voice died into air, and the inſtrument, which had been heard

* MILTON.

before,

before, ſounded in low ſymphony. St. Aubert now obſerved, that it produced a tone much more full and melodious than that of a guitar, and ſtill more melancholy and ſoft than the lute. They continued to liſten, but the ſounds returned no more. "This is ſtrange!" ſaid St. Aubert, at length interrupting the ſilence. "Very ſtrange!" ſaid Emily. "It is ſo," rejoined La Voiſin, and they were again ſilent.

After a long pauſe, "It is now about eighteen years ſince I firſt heard that muſic," ſaid La Voiſin; "I remember it was on a fine ſummer's night, much like this, but later, that I was walking in the woods, and alone. I remember, too, that my ſpirits were very low, for one of my boys was ill, and we feared we ſhould loſe him. I had been watching at his bed-ſide all the evening while his mother ſlept; for ſhe had ſat up with him the night before. I had been watching, and went out for a little freſh air, the day had been very ſultry. As I walked under the ſhades and muſed, I heard muſic

at

at a diſtance, and thought it was Claude playing upon his flute, as he often did of a fine evening, at the cottage door. But, when I came to a place, where the trees opened, (I ſhall never forget it!) and ſtood looking up at the north-lights, which ſhot up the heaven to a great height, I heard all of a ſudden ſuch ſounds!—they came ſo as I cannot deſcribe. It was like the muſic of angels, and I looked up again almoſt expecting to ſee them in the ſky. When I came home, I told what I had heard, but they laughed at me, and ſaid it muſt be ſome of the ſhepherds playing on their pipes, and I could not perſuade them to the contrary. A few nights after, however, my wife herſelf heard the ſame ſounds, and was as much ſurpriſed as I was, and father Denis frightened her ſadly by ſaying, that it was muſic come to warn her of her child's death, and that muſic often came to houſes where there was a dying perſon."

Emily, on hearing this, ſhrunk with a ſuperſtitious dread entirely new to her, and could

could ſcarcely conceal her agitation from St. Aubert.

"But the boy lived, monſieur, in ſpite of father Denis."

"Father Denis!" ſaid St. Aubert, who had liſtened to "narrative old age" with patient attention, "are we near a convent then?"

"Yes, ſir, the convent of St. Clair ſtands at no great diſtance, on the ſea ſhore yonder."

"Ah!" ſaid St. Aubert, as if ſtruck with ſome ſudden remembrance, "the convent of St. Clair!" Emily obſerved the clouds of grief, mingled with a faint expreſſion of horror, gathering on his brow; his countenance became fixed, and, touched as it now was by the ſilver whiteneſs of the moon-light, he reſembled one of thoſe marble ſtatues of a monument, which ſeem to bend, in hopeleſs ſorrow, over the aſhes of the dead, ſhewn

"by the blunted light
That the dim moon through painted caſements lends*."

* The Emigrants.

"But, my dear sir," said Emily, anxious to dissipate his thoughts, "you forget that repose is necessary to you. If our kind host will give me leave, I will prepare your bed, for I know how you like it to be made." St. Aubert, recollecting himself, and smiling affectionately, desired she would not add to her fatigue by that attention; and La Voisin, whose consideration for his guest had been suspended by the interests, which his own narrative had recalled, now started from his seat, and, apologizing for not having called Agnes from the green, hurried out of the room.

In a few moments he returned with his daughter, a young woman of a pleasing countenance, and Emily learned from her, what she had not before suspected, that, for their accommodation, it was necessary part of La Voisin's family should leave their beds; she lamented this circumstance, but Agnes, by her reply, fully proved that she inherited, at least, a share of her father's courteous hospitality. It was settled, that some

ſome of her children and Michael ſhould ſleep in the neighbouring cottage.

" If I am better, to-morrow, my dear," ſaid St. Aubert when Emily returned to him, " I mean to ſet out at an early hour, that we may reſt, during the heat of the day, and will travel towards home. In the preſent ſtate of my health and ſpirits, I cannot look on a longer journey with pleaſure, and I am alſo very anxious to reach La Valleé." Emily, though ſhe alſo deſired to return, was grieved at her father's ſudden wiſh to do ſo, which ſhe thought indicated a greater degree of indiſpoſition than he would acknowledge. St. Aubert now retired to reſt, and Emily to her little chamber, but not to immediate repoſe. Her thoughts returned to the late converſation, concerning the ſtate of departed ſpirits; a ſubject, at this time, particularly affecting to her, when ſhe had every reaſon to believe, that her dear father would ere long be numbered with them. She leaned penſively on the little open caſement, and in deep thought fixed

fixed her eyes on the heaven, whoſe blue unclouded concave was ſtudded thick with ſtars, the worlds, perhaps, of ſpirits, unſphered of mortal mould. As her eyes wandered along the boundleſs æther, her thoughts roſe, as before, towards the ſublimity of the Deity, and to the contemplation of futurity. No buſy note of this world interrupted the courſe of her mind; the merry dance had ceaſed, and every cottager had retired to his home. The ſtill air ſeemed ſcarcely to breathe upon the woods, and, now and then, the diſtant ſound of a ſolitary ſheep-bell, or of a cloſing caſement, was all that broke on ſilence. At length, even this hint of human being was heard no more. Elevated and enrapt, while her eyes were often wet with tears of ſublime devotion and ſolemn awe, ſhe continued at the caſement, till the gloom of midnight hung over the earth, and the planet, which La Voiſin had pointed out, ſunk below the woods. She then recollected what he had ſaid concerning this planet, and the myſte-

rious muſic; and, as ſhe lingered at the window, half hoping and half fearing that it would return, her mind was led to the remembrance of the extreme emotion her father had ſhewn on mention of the Marquis La Villeroi's death, and of the fate of the Marchioneſs, and ſhe felt ſtrongly intereſted concerning the remote cauſe of this emotion. Her ſurpriſe and curioſity were indeed the greater, becauſe ſhe did not recollect ever to have heard him mention the name of Villeroi.

No muſic, however, ſtole on the ſilence of the night; and Emily, perceiving the lateneſs of the hour, returned to a ſcene of fatigue, remembered that ſhe was to riſe early in the morning, and withdrew from the window to repoſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

. . . . . "Let thoſe deplore their doom,
Whoſe hope ſtill grovels in this dark ſojourn.
But lofty ſouls can look beyond the tomb,
Can ſmile at fate, and wonder how they mourn.
Shall Spring to theſe ſad ſcenes no more return?
Is yonder wave the ſun's eternal bed?—
Soon ſhall the orient with new luſtre burn,
And Spring ſhall ſoon her vital influence ſhed,
Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead!"

BEATTIE.

EMILY, called, as ſhe had requeſted, at an early hour, awoke, little refreſhed by ſleep, for uneaſy dreams had purſued her, and marred the kindeſt bleſſing of the unhappy. But, when ſhe opened her caſement, looked out upon the woods, bright with the morning ſun, and inſpired the pure air, her mind was ſoothed. The ſcene was filled with that cheering freſhneſs, which ſeems to breathe the very ſpirit of health, and ſhe heard only ſweet and *pictureſque* ſounds, if

"it is ſo pleaſant, ſo quiet, and ſo neat; and this air that one breathes—if any thing could reſtore loſt health, it would ſurely be this air."

La Voiſin bowed gratefully, and replied, with the gallantry of a Frenchman, "Our cottage may be envied, ſir, ſince you and Mademoiſelle have honoured it with your preſence." St. Aubert gave him a friendly ſmile for his compliment, and ſat down to a table, ſpread with cream, fruit, new cheeſe, butter, and coffee. Emily, who had obſerved her father with attention, and thought he looked very ill, endeavoured to perſuade him to defer travelling till the afternoon; but he ſeemed very anxious to be at home, and his anxiety he expreſſed repeatedly, and with an earneſtneſs that was unuſual with him. He now ſaid, he found himſelf as well as he had been of late, and that he could bear travelling better in the cool hour of the morning, than at any other time. But, while he was talking with his venerable hoſt, and thanking him for his kind attentions, Emily obſerved his countenance

ſentance change, and, before ſhe could reach him, he fell back in his chair. In a few moments he recovered from the ſudden faintneſs that had come over him, but felt ſo ill, that he perceived himſelf unable to ſet out, and, having remained a little while, ſtruggling againſt the preſſure of indiſpoſition, he begged he might be helped up ſtairs to bed. This requeſt renewed all the terror which Emily had ſuffered on the preceding evening; but, though ſcarcely able to ſupport herſelf under the ſudden ſhock it gave her, ſhe tried to conceal her apprehenſions from St. Aubert, and gave her trembling arm to aſſiſt him to the door of his chamber.

When he was once more in bed, he deſired that Emily, who was then weeping in her own room, might be called; and, as ſhe came, he waved his hand for every other perſon to quit the apartment. When they were alone, he held out his hand to her, and fixed his eyes upon her countenance, with an expreſſion ſo full of tenderneſs and grief, that all her fortitude forſook her, and

ſhe burſt into an agony of tears. St. Aubert ſeemed ſtruggling to acquire firmneſs, but was ſtill unable to ſpeak; he could only preſs her hand, and check the tears that ſtood trembling in his eyes. At length, he commanded his voice, "My dear child," ſaid he, trying to ſmile through his anguiſh, "my dear Emily!"—and pauſed again. He raiſed his eyes to heaven, as if in prayer, and then, in a firmer tone, and with a look, in which the tenderneſs of the father was dignified by the pious ſolemnity of the ſaint, he ſaid, "My dear child, I would ſoften the painful truth I have to tell you, but I find myſelf quite unequal to the art. Alas! I would, at this moment, conceal it from you, but that it would be moſt cruel to deceive you. It cannot be long before we muſt part; let us talk of it, that our thoughts and our prayers may prepare us to bear it." His voice faltered, while Emily, ſtill weeping, preſſed his hand cloſe to her heart, which ſwelled with a convulſive ſigh, but ſhe could not look up.

"Let

"Let me not waſte theſe moments," ſaid St. Aubert, recovering himſelf, "I have much to ſay. There is a circumſtance of ſolemn conſequence, which I have to mention, and a ſolemn promiſe to obtain from you; when this is done I ſhall be eaſier. You have obſerved, my dear, how anxious I am to reach home, but know not all my reaſons for this. Liſten to what I am going to ſay.—Yet ſtay—before I ſay more give me this promiſe, a promiſe made to your dying father!"—St. Aubert was interrupted; Emily, ſtruck by his laſt words, as if for the firſt time, with a conviction of his immediate danger, raiſed her head: her tears ſtopped, and gazing at him for a moment with an expreſſion of unutterable anguiſh, a ſlight convulſion ſeized her, and ſhe ſunk ſenſeleſs in her chair. St. Aubert's cries brought La Voiſin and his daughter to the room, and they adminiſtered every means in their power to reſtore her, but, for a conſiderable time, without effect. When ſhe recovered, St. Aubert was ſo ex-,

hauſted by the ſcene he had witneſſed, that it was many minutes before he had ſtrength to ſpeak; he was, however, ſomewhat revived by a cordial, which Emily gave him; and, being again alone with her, he exerted himſelf to tranquillize her ſpirits, and to offer her all the comfort of which her ſituation admitted. She threw herſelf into his arms, wept on his neck, and grief made her ſo inſenſible to all he ſaid, that he ceaſed to offer the alleviations, which he himſelf could not, at this moment, feel, and mingled his ſilent tears with hers. Recalled, at length, to a ſenſe of duty, ſhe tried to ſpare her father from farther view of her ſuffering; and, quitting his embrace, dried her tears, and ſaid ſomething, which ſhe meant for conſolation. "My dear Emily," replied St. Aubert, "my dear child, we muſt look up with humble confidence to that Being, who has protected and comforted us in every danger, and in every affliction we have known; to whoſe eye every moment of our lives has been expoſed; he will not, he does not,

not, forſake us now; I feel his conſolations in my heart. I ſhall leave you, my child, ſtill in his care; and, though I depart from this world, I ſhall be ſtill in his preſence. Nay, weep not again, my Emily. In death there is nothing new, or ſurpriſing, ſince we all know, that we are born to die; and nothing terrible to thoſe, who can confide in an all-powerful God. Had my life been ſpared now, after a very few years, in the courſe of nature, I muſt have reſigned it; old age, with all its train of infirmity, its privations and its ſorrows, would have been mine; and then, at laſt, death would have come, and called forth the tears you now ſhed. Rather, my child, rejoice, that I am ſaved from ſuch ſuffering, and that I am permitted to die with a mind unimpaired, and ſenſible of the comforts of faith and of reſignation." St. Aubert pauſed, fatigued with ſpeaking. Emily again endeavoured to aſſume an air of compoſure; and, in replying to what he had ſaid, tried to ſooth him with a belief, that he had not ſpoken in vain.

When he had repoſed a while, he reſumed the converſation. "Let me return," ſaid he, "to a ſubject, which is very near my heart. I ſaid I had a ſolemn promiſe to receive from you; let me receive it now, before I explain the chief circumſtance which it concerns; there are others, of which your peace requires that you ſhould reſt in ignorance. Promiſe, then, that you will perform exactly what I ſhall enjoin."

Emily, awed by the earneſt ſolemnity of his manner, dried her tears, that had begun again to flow, in ſpite of her efforts to ſuppreſs them; and, looking eloquently at St. Aubert, bound herſelf to do whatever he ſhould require by a vow, at which ſhe ſhuddered, yet knew not why.

He proceeded: "I know you too well, my Emily, to believe, that you would break any promiſe, much leſs one thus ſolemnly given; your aſſurance gives me peace, and the obſervance of it is of the utmoſt importance to your tranquillity. Hear, then, what I am going to tell you. The cloſet, which

which adjoins my chamber at La Vallée, has a ſliding board in the floor. You will know it by a remarkable knot in the wood, and by its being the next board, except one, to the wainſcot, which fronts the door. At the diſtance of about a yard from that end, nearer the window, you will perceive a line acroſs it, as if the plank had been joined;—the way to open it is this:—Preſs your foot upon the line, the end of the board will then ſink, and you may ſlide it with eaſe beneath the other. Below, you will ſee a hollow place." St. Aubert pauſed for breath, and Emily ſat fixed in deep attention. "Do you underſtand theſe directions, my dear?" ſaid he. Emily, though ſcarcely able to ſpeak, aſſured him, that ſhe did.

"When you return home, then," he added with a deep ſigh—

At the mention of her return home, all the melancholy circumſtances, that muſt attend this return, ruſhed upon her fancy; ſhe burſt into convulſive grief, and St. Aubert himſelf,

himſelf, affected beyond the reſiſtance of the fortitude which he had, at firſt, ſummoned, wept with her. After ſome moments, he compoſed himſelf. "My dear child," ſaid he, "be comforted. When I am gone, you will not be forſaken—I leave you only in the more immediate care of that Providence, which has never yet forſaken me. Do not afflict me with this exceſs of grief; rather teach me by your example to bear my own." He ſtopped again, and Emily, the more ſhe endeavoured to reſtrain her emotion, found it the leſs poſſible to do ſo.

St. Aubert, who now ſpoke with pain, reſumed the ſubject. "That cloſet, my dear,—when you return home, go to it; and, beneath the board I have deſcribed, you will find a packet of written papers. Attend to me now, for the promiſe you have given particularly relates to what I ſhall direct. Theſe papers you muſt burn—and, ſolemnly I command you, *without examining them.*"

Emily's

Emily's ſurpriſe, for a moment, overcame her grief, and ſhe ventured to aſk, why this muſt be? St. Aubert replied, that, "if it had been right for him to explain his reaſons, her late promiſe would have been unneceſſarily exacted. It is ſufficient for you, my love, to have a deep ſenſe of the importance of obſerving me in this inſtance." St. Aubert proceeded. "Under that board you will alſo find about two hundred louis d'ors, wrapped in a ſilk purſe; indeed, it was to ſecure whatever money might be in the chateau that this ſecret place was contrived, at a time when the province was over-run by troops of men, who took advantage of the tumults, and became plunderers.

"But I have yet another promiſe to receive from you, which is—that you will never, whatever may be your future circumſtances, *ſell* the chateau." St. Aubert even enjoined her, whenever ſhe might marry, to make it an article in the contract, that the chateau ſhould always be hers.

He

He then gave her a more minute account of his preſent circumſtances than he had yet done, adding, "The two hundred louis, with what money you will now find in my purſe, is all the ready money I have to leave you. I have told you how I am circumſtanced with M. Motteville, at Paris. Ah, my child! I leave you poor—but not deſtitute," he added, after a long pauſe. Emily could make no reply to any thing he now ſaid, but knelt at the bed-ſide, with her face upon the quilt, weeping over the hand ſhe held there.

After this converſation, the mind of St. Aubert appeared to be much more at eaſe; but, exhauſted by the effort of ſpeaking, he ſunk into a kind of doze, and Emily continued to watch and weep beſide him, till a gentle tap at the chamber-door rouſed her. It was La Voiſin, come to ſay, that a confeſſor from the neighbouring convent was below, ready to attend St. Aubert. Emily would not ſuffer her father to be diſturbed, but deſired, that the prieſt might not leave

the

the cottage. When St. Aubert awoke from this doze, his ſenſes were confuſed, and it was ſome moments before he recovered them ſufficiently to know that it was Emily who ſat beſide him. He then moved his lips, and ſtretched forth his hand to her; as ſhe received which, ſhe ſunk back in her chair, overcome by the impreſſion of death on his countenance. In a few minutes he recovered his voice, and Emily then aſked, if he wiſhed to ſee the confeſſor; he replied, that he did; and, when the holy father appeared, ſhe withdrew. They remained alone together above half an hour; when Emily was called in, ſhe found St. Aubert more agitated than when ſhe had left him, and ſhe gazed, with a ſlight degree of reſentment, at the friar, as the cauſe of this; who, however, looked mildly and mournfully at her, and turned away. St. Aubert, in a tremulous voice, ſaid, he wiſhed her to join in prayer with him, and aſked if La Voiſin would do ſo too. The old man and his daughter came; they both

wept,

wept, and knelt with Emily round the bed, while the holy father read in a ſolemn voice the ſervice for the dying. St. Aubert lay with a ſerene countenance, and ſeemed to join fervently in the devotion, while tears often ſtole from beneath his cloſed eye-lids, and Emily's ſobs more than once interrupted the ſervice.

When it was concluded, and extreme unction had been adminiſtered, the friar withdrew. St. Aubert then made a ſign for La Voiſin to come nearer. He gave him his hand, and was, for a moment, ſilent. At length, he ſaid, in a trembling voice, "My good friend, our acquaintance has been ſhort, but long enough to give you an opportunity of ſhewing me much kind attention. I cannot doubt, that you will extend this kindneſs to my daughter, when I am gone; ſhe will have need of it. I entruſt her to your care during the few days ſhe will remain here. I need ſay no more—you know the feelings of a father, for you have children; mine would be, indeed,

deed, ſevere if I had leſs confidence in you." He pauſed. La Voiſin aſſured him, and his tears bore teſtimony to his ſincerity, that he would do all he could to ſoften her affliction, and that, if St. Aubert wiſhed it, he would even attend her into Gaſcony; an offer ſo pleaſing to St. Aubert, that he had ſcarcely words to acknowledge his ſenſe of the old man's kindneſs, or to tell him, that he accepted it. The ſcene, that followed between St. Aubert and Emily, affected La Voiſin ſo much, that he quitted the chamber, and ſhe was again left alone with her father, whoſe ſpirits ſeemed fainting faſt, but neither his ſenſes, or his voice, yet failed him; and, at intervals, he employed much of theſe laſt awful moments in adviſing his daughter, as to her future conduct. Perhaps, he never had thought more juſtly, or expreſſed himſelf more clearly, than he did now.

"Above all, my dear Emily," ſaid he, "do not indulge in the pride of fine feeling, the romantic error of amiable minds. Thoſe, who

who really poſſeſs ſenſibility, ought early to be taught, that it is a dangerous quality, which is continually extracting the exceſs of miſery, or delight, from every ſurrounding circumſtance. And, ſince, in our paſſage through this world, painful circumſtances occur more frequently than pleaſing ones, and ſince our ſenſe of evil is, I fear, more acute than our ſenſe of good, we become the victims of our feelings, unleſs we can in ſome degree command them. I know you will ſay, (for you are young, my Emily) I know you will ſay, that you are contented ſometimes to ſuffer, rather than to give up your refined ſenſe of happineſs, at others; but, when your mind has been long haraſſed by viciſſitude, you will be content to reſt, and you will then recover from your deluſion. You will perceive, that the phantom of happineſs is exchanged for the ſubſtance; for happineſs ariſes in a ſtate of peace, not of tumult. It is of a temperate and uniform nature, and can no more exiſt in a heart, that is continually alive to minute

nute circumſtances, than in one that is dead to feeling. You ſee, my dear, that, though I would guard you againſt the dangers of ſenſibility, I am not an advocate for apathy. At your age I ſhould have ſaid *that* is a vice more hateful than all the errors of ſenſibility, and I ſay ſo ſtill. I call it a *vice*, becauſe it leads to poſitive evil; in this, however, it does no more than an ill-governed ſenſibility, which, by ſuch a rule, might alſo be called a vice; but the evil of the former is of more general conſequence. I have exhauſted myſelf," ſaid St. Aubert, feebly, "and have wearied you, my Emily; but, on a ſubject ſo important to your future comfort, I am anxious to be perfectly underſtood."

Emily aſſured him, that his advice was moſt precious to her, and that ſhe would never forget it, or ceaſe from endeavouring to profit by it. St. Aubert ſmiled affectionately and ſorrowfully upon her. "I repeat it," ſaid he, "I would not teach you to become inſenſible, if I could; I would only

only warn you of the evils of ſuſceptibility, and point out how you may avoid them. Beware, my love, I conjure you, of that ſelf-deluſion, which has been fatal to the peace of ſo many perſons; beware of priding yourſelf on the gracefulneſs of ſenſibility; if you yield to this vanity, your happineſs is loſt for ever. Always remember how much more valuable is the ſtrength of fortitude, than the grace of ſenſibility. Do not, however, confound fortitude with apathy; apathy cannot know the virtue. Remember, too, that one act of beneficence, one act of real uſefulneſs, is worth all the abſtract ſentiment in the world. Sentiment is a diſgrace, inſtead of an ornament, unleſs it lead us to good actions. The miſer, who thinks himſelf reſpectable, merely becauſe he poſſeſſes wealth, and thus miſtakes the means of doing good, for the actual accompliſhment of it, is not more blamable than the man of ſentiment, without active virtue. You may have obſerved perſons, who delight ſo much in this ſort of ſenſibility to

ſenti-

ſentiment, which excludes that to the calls of any practical virtue, that they turn from the diſtreſſed, and, becauſe their ſufferings are painful to be contemplated, do not endeavour to relieve them. How deſpicable is that humanity, which can be contented to pity, where it might aſſuage!"

St. Aubert, ſome time after, ſpoke of Madame Cheron, his ſiſter. "Let me inform you of a circumſtance, that nearly affects your welfare," he added. "We have, you know, had little intercourſe for ſome years; but, as ſhe is now your only female relation, I have thought it proper to conſign you to her care, as you will ſee in my will, till you are of age, and to recommend you to her protection afterwards. She is not exactly the perſon, to whom I would have committed my Emily, but I had no alternative, and I believe her to be upon the whole—a good kind of woman. I need not recommend it to your prudence, my love, to endeavour to conciliate her kind-

kindneſs; you will do this for his ſake, who has often wiſhed to do ſo for yours."

Emily aſſured him, that, whatever he requeſted ſhe would religiouſly perform to the utmoſt of her ability. "Alas!" added ſhe, in a voice interrupted by ſighs, "that will ſoon be all which remains for me; it will be almoſt my only conſolation to fulfil your wiſhes."

St. Aubert looked up ſilently in her face, as if he would have ſpoken, but his ſpirit ſunk a while, and his eyes became heavy and dull. She felt that look at her heart. "My dear father!" ſhe exclaimed; and then, checking herſelf, preſſed his hand cloſer, and hid her face with her handkerchief. Her tears were concealed, but St. Aubert heard her convulſive ſobs. His ſpirits returned. "O my child!" ſaid he, faintly, "let my conſolations be yours. I die in peace; for I know, that I am about to return to the boſom of my Father, who will ſtill be your Father, when I am gone.

Always

Always truſt in him, my love, and he will ſupport you in theſe moments, as he ſupports me."

Emily could only liſten, and weep; but the extreme compoſure of his manner, and the faith and hope he expreſſed, ſomewhat ſoothed her anguiſh. Yet, whenever ſhe looked upon his emaciated countenance, and ſaw the lines of death beginning to prevail over it—ſaw his ſunk eyes, ſtill bent on her, and their heavy lids preſſing to a cloſe, there was a pang in her heart, ſuch as defied expreſſion, though it required filial virtue, like hers, to forbear the attempt.

He deſired once more to bleſs her; "Where are you, my dear?" ſaid he, as he ſtretched forth his hands. Emily had turned to the window, that he might not perceive her anguiſh; ſhe now underſtood, that his ſight had failed him. When he had given her his bleſſing, and it ſeemed to be the laſt effort of expiring life, he ſunk back on his pillow. She kiſſed his forehead; the damps of death had ſettled there,

and, forgetting her fortitude for a moment, her tears mingled with them. St. Aubert lifted up his eyes; the ſpirit of a father returned to them, but it quickly vaniſhed, and he ſpoke no more.

St. Aubert lingered till about three o'clock in the afternoon, and, thus gradually ſinking into death, he expired without a ſtruggle, or a ſigh.

Emily was led from the chamber by La Voiſin and his daughter, who did what they could to comfort her. The old man ſat and wept with her. Agnes was more erroneouſly officious.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

" O'er him, whoſe doom thy virtues grieve,
Aerial forms ſhall ſit at eve,
And bend the penſive head."

COLLINS.

THE monk, who had before appeared, returned in the evening to offer conſolation to Emily, and brought a kind meſſage from the lady abbeſs, inviting her to the convent. Emily, though ſhe did not accept the offer, returned an anſwer expreſſive of her gratitude. The holy converſation of the friar, whoſe mild benevolence of manners bore ſome reſemblance to thoſe of St. Aubert, ſoothed the violence of her grief, and lifted her heart to the Being, who, extending through all place and all eternity, looks on the events of this little world as on the ſhadows of a moment, and beholds equally, and in the ſame inſtant, the ſoul

that has paſſed the gates of death, and that, which ſtill lingers in the body. "In the ſight of God," ſaid Emily, "my dear father now exiſts, as truly as he yeſterday exiſted to me; it is to me only that he is dead; to God and to himſelf he yet lives!"

The good monk left her more tranquil than ſhe had been ſince St. Aubert died; and, before ſhe retired to her little cabin for the night, ſhe truſted herſelf ſo far as to viſit the corpſe. Silent, and without weeping, ſhe ſtood by its ſide. The features, placid and ſerene, told the nature of the laſt ſenſations, that had lingered in the now deſerted frame. For a moment ſhe turned away, in horror of the ſtillneſs in which death had fixed that countenance, never till now ſeen otherwiſe than animated; then gazed on it with a mixture of doubt and awful aſtoniſhment. Her reaſon could ſcarcely overcome an involuntary and unaccountable expectation of ſeeing that beloved countenance ſtill ſuſceptible. She continued to gaze wildly; took up the cold hand;

hand; ſpoke; ſtill gazed, and then burſt into a tranſport of grief. La Voiſin, hearing her ſobs, came into the room to lead her away, but ſhe heard nothing, and only begged that he would leave her.

Again alone, ſhe indulged her tears, and, when the gloom of evening obſcured the chamber, and almoſt veiled from her eyes the object of her diſtreſs, ſhe ſtill hung over the body; till her ſpirits, at length, were exhauſted, and ſhe became tranquil. La Voiſin again knocked at the door, and entreated that ſhe would come to the common apartment. Before ſhe went, ſhe kiſſed the lips of St. Aubert, as ſhe was wont to do when ſhe bade him good night. Again ſhe kiſſed them; her heart felt as if it would break, a few tears of agony ſtarted to her eyes, ſhe looked up to heaven, then at St. Aubert, and left the room.

Retired to her lonely cabin, her melancholy thoughts ſtill hovered round the body of her deceaſed parent; and, when ſhe ſunk into a kind of ſlumber, the images of her

waking mind ſtill haunted her fancy. She thought ſhe ſaw her father approaching her with a benign countenance; then, ſmiling mournfully and pointing upwards, his lips moved, but, inſtead of words, ſhe heard ſweet muſic borne on the diſtant air, and preſently ſaw his features glow with the mild rapture of a ſuperior being. The ſtrain ſeemed to ſwell louder, and ſhe awoke. The viſion was gone, but muſic yet came to her ear in ſtrains ſuch as angels might breathe. She doubted, liſtened, raiſed herſelf in the bed, and again liſtened. It was muſic, and not an illuſion of her imagination. After a ſolemn ſteady harmony, it pauſed; then roſe again, in mournful ſweetneſs, and then died, in a cadence, that ſeemed to bear away the liſtening ſoul to heaven. She inſtantly remembered the muſic of the preceding night, with the ſtrange circumſtances, related by La Voiſin, and the affecting converſation it had led to, concerning the ſtate of departed ſpirits. All that St. Aubert had ſaid, on that ſubject, now preſſed upon

upon her heart, and overwhelmed it. What a change in a few hours! He, who then could only conjecture, was now made acquainted with truth; was himself become one of the departed! As she listened, she was chilled with superstitious awe, her tears stopped; and she rose, and went to the window. All without was obscured in shade; but Emily, turning her eyes from the massy darkness of the woods, whose waving outline appeared on the horizon, saw, on the left, that effulgent planet, which the old man had pointed out, setting over the woods. She remembered what he had said concerning it, and, the music now coming at intervals on the air, she unclosed the casement to listen to the strains, that soon gradually sunk to a greater distance, and tried to discover whence they came. The obscurity prevented her from distinguishing any object on the green platform below; and the sounds became fainter and fainter, till they softened into silence. She listened, but they returned no more. Soon after, she observed

the planet trembling between the fringed tops of the woods, and, in the next moment, ſink behind them. Chilled with a melancholy awe, ſhe retired once more to her bed, and, at length, forgot for a while her ſorrows in ſleep.

On the following morning, ſhe was viſited by a ſiſter of the convent, who came, with kind offices and a ſecond invitation from the lady abbeſs; and Emily, though ſhe could not forſake the cottage, while the remains of her father were in it, conſented, however painful ſuch a viſit muſt be, in the preſent ſtate of her ſpirits, to pay her reſpects to the abbeſs, in the evening.

About an hour before ſun-ſet, La Voiſin ſhewed her the way through the woods to the convent, which ſtood in a ſmall bay of the Mediterranean, crowned by a woody amphitheatre; and Emily, had ſhe been leſs unhappy, would have admired the extenſive ſea view, that appeared from the green ſlope, in front of the edifice, and the rich ſhores, hung with woods and paſtures, that extended

on

on either hand. But her thoughts were now occupied by one ſad idea, and the features of nature were to her colourleſs and without form. The bell for veſpers ſtruck, as ſhe paſſed the ancient gate of the convent, and ſeemed the funereal note for St. Aubert. Little incidents affect a mind enervated by ſorrow; Emily ſtruggled againſt the ſickening faintneſs, that came over her, and was led into the preſence of the abbeſs, who received her with an air of maternal tenderneſs; an air of ſuch gentle ſolicitude and conſideration, as touched her with an inſtantaneous gratitude; her eyes were filled with tears, and the words ſhe would have ſpoken faltered on her lips. The abbeſs led her to a ſeat, and ſat down beſide her, ſtill holding her hand and regarding her in ſilence, as Emily dried her tears and attempted to ſpeak. "Be compoſed, my daughter," ſaid the abbeſs in a ſoothing voice, "do not ſpeak yet; I know all you would ſay. Your ſpirits muſt be ſoothed. We are going to prayers;—will you attend

our evening ſervice? It is comfortable, my child, to look up in our afflictions to a father, who ſees and pities us, and who chaſtens in his mercy."

Emily's tears flowed again, but a thouſand ſweet emotions mingled with them. The abbeſs ſuffered her to weep without interruption, and watched over her with a look of benignity, that might have characterized the countenance of a guardian angel. Emily, when ſhe became tranquil, was encouraged to ſpeak without reſerve, and to mention the motive, that made her unwilling to quit the cottage, which the abbeſs did not oppoſe even by a hint; but praiſed the filial piety of her conduct, and added a hope, that ſhe would paſs a few days at the convent, before ſhe returned to La Vallée. "You muſt allow yourſelf a little time to recover from your firſt ſhock, my daughter, before you encounter a ſecond; I will not affect to conceal from you how much I know your heart muſt ſuffer, on returning to the ſcene of your former happineſs. Here, you

will

will have all, that quiet and ſympathy and religion can give, to reſtore your ſpirits. But come," added ſhe, obſerving the tears ſwell in Emily's eyes, " we will go to the chapel."

Emily followed to the parlour, where the nuns were aſſembled, to whom the abbeſs committed her, ſaying, " This is a daughter, for whom I have much eſteem; be ſiſters to her."

They paſſed on in a train to the chapel, where the ſolemn devotion, with which the ſervice was performed, elevated her mind, and brought to it the comforts of faith and reſignation.

Twilight came on, before the abbeſs's kindneſs would ſuffer Emily to depart, when ſhe left the convent, with a heart much lighter than ſhe had entered it, and was reconducted by La Voiſin through the woods, the penſive gloom of which was in uniſon with the temper of her mind; and ſhe purſued the little wild path, in muſing ſilence, till her guide ſuddenly ſtopped, looked round, and then ſtruck out of the path into

the high graſs, ſaying he had miſtaken the road. He now walked on quickly, and Emily, proceeding with difficulty over the obſcured and uneven ground, was left at ſome diſtance, till her voice arreſted him, who ſeemed unwilling to ſtop, and ſtill hurried on. "If you are in doubt about the way," ſaid Emily, "had we not better enquire it at the chateau yonder, between the trees?"

"No," replied La Voiſin, "there is no occaſion. When we reach that brook, ma'amſelle, (you ſee the light upon the water there, beyond the woods) when we reach that brook, we ſhall be at home preſently. I don't know how I happened to miſtake the path; I ſeldom come this way after ſun-ſet."

"It is ſolitary enough," ſaid Emily, "but you have no banditti here." No, ma'amſelle—no banditti."

"What are you afraid of then, my good friend? you are not ſuperſtitious?" "No, not ſuperſtitious; but, to tell you the truth,

lady, nobody likes to go near that chateau, after duſk." "By whom is it inhabited," ſaid Emily, "that it is ſo formidable?" "Why, ma'amſelle, it is ſcarcely inhabited, for our lord the Marquis, and the lord of all theſe fine woods, too, is dead. He had not once been in it, for theſe many years, and his people, who have the care of it, live in a cottage cloſe by." Emily now underſtood this to be the chateau, which La Voiſin had formerly pointed out, as having belonged to the Marquis Villeroi, on the mention of which her father had appeared ſo much affected.

"Ah! it is a deſolate place now," continued La Voiſin, "and ſuch a grand, fine place, as I remember it!" Emily enquired what had occaſioned this lamentable change; but the old man was ſilent, and Emily, whoſe intereſt was awakened by the fear he had expreſſed, and above all by a recollection of her father's agitation, repeated the queſtion, and added, "If you are neither afraid of the inhabitants, my good friend,

nor

nor are ſuperſtitious, how happens it, that you dread to paſs near that chateau in the dark?"

"Perhaps, then, I am a little ſuperſtitious, ma'amſelle; and, if you knew what I do, you might be ſo too. Strange things have happened there. Monſieur, your good father, appeared to have known the late Marchioneſs." "Pray inform me what did happen?" ſaid Emily, with much emotion.

"Alas! ma'amſelle," anſwered La Voiſin, "enquire no further: it is not for me to lay open the domeſtic ſecrets of my lord."—Emily, ſurpriſed by the old man's words, and his manner of delivering them, forbore to repeat her queſtion; a nearer intereſt, the remembrance of St. Aubert, occupied her thoughts, and ſhe was led to recollect the muſic ſhe heard on the preceding night, which ſhe mentioned to La Voiſin. "You was not alone, ma'amſelle, in this," he replied, "I heard it too; but I have ſo often heard it, at the ſame hour, that I was ſcarcely ſurpriſed."

"You

"You doubtleſs believe this muſic to have ſome connection with the chateau," ſaid Emily ſuddenly, "and are, therefore, ſuperſtitious." "It may be ſo, ma'amſelle, but there are other circumſtances, belonging to that chateau, which I remember, and ſadly too." A heavy ſigh followed: but Emily's delicacy reſtrained the curioſity theſe words revived, and ſhe enquired no further.

On reaching the cottage, all the violence of her grief returned; it ſeemed as if ſhe had eſcaped its heavy preſſure only while ſhe was removed from the object of it. She paſſed immediately to the chamber, where the remains of her father were laid, and yielded to all the anguiſh of hopeleſs grief. La Voiſin, at length, perſuaded her to leave the room, and ſhe returned to her own, where, exhauſted by the ſufferings of the day, ſhe ſoon fell into deep ſleep, and awoke conſiderably refreſhed.

When the dreadful hour arrived, in which the remains of St. Aubert were to be taken from her for ever, ſhe went alone to the chamber

chamber to look upon his countenance yet once again, and La Voiſin, who had waited patiently below ſtairs, till her deſpair ſhould ſubſide, with the reſpect due to grief, forbore to interrupt the indulgence of it, till ſurpriſe, at the length of her ſtay, and then apprehenſion overcame his delicacy, and he went to lead her from the chamber. Having tapped gently at the door, without receiving an anſwer, he liſtened attentively, but all was ſtill; no ſigh, no ſob of anguiſh was heard. Yet more alarmed by this ſilence, he opened the door, and found Emily lying ſenſeleſs acroſs the foot of the bed, near which ſtood the coffin. His calls procured aſſiſtance, and ſhe was carried to her room, where proper applications, at length, reſtored her.

During her ſtate of inſenſibility, La Voiſin had given directions for the coffin to be cloſed, and he ſucceeded in perſuading Emily to forbear reviſiting the chamber. She, indeed, felt herſelf unequal to this, and alſo perceived the neceſſity of ſparing her ſpirits, and collecting fortitude ſufficient to

bear

bear her through the approaching ſcene. St. Aubert had given a particular injunction, that his remains ſhould be interred in the church of the convent of St. Clair, and, in mentioning the north chancel, near the ancient tomb of the Villerois, had pointed out the exact ſpot, where he wiſhed to be laid. The ſuperior had granted this place for the interment, and thither, therefore, the ſad proceſſion now moved, which was met, at the gates, by the venerable prieſt, followed by a train of friars. Every perſon, who heard the ſolemn chant of the anthem, and the peal of the organ, that ſtruck up, when the body entered the church, and ſaw alſo the feeble ſteps, and the aſſumed tranquillity of Emily, gave her involuntary tears. She ſhed none, but walked, her face partly ſhaded by a thin black veil, between two perſons, who ſupported her, preceded by the abbeſs, and followed by nuns, whoſe plaintive voices mellowed the ſwelling harmony of the dirge. When the proceſſion came to the grave the muſic ceaſed. Emily drew the veil entirely

over

over her face, and, in a momentary pauſe, between the anthem and the reſt of the ſervice, her ſobs were diſtinctly audible. The holy father began the ſervice; and Emily again commanded her feelings, till the coffin was let down, and ſhe heard the earth rattle on its lid. Then, as ſhe ſhuddered, a groan burſt from her heart, and ſhe leaned for ſupport on the perſon who ſtood next to her. In a few moments ſhe recovered; and, when ſhe heard thoſe affecting and ſublime words: "His body is buried in peace, and his ſoul returns to Him that gave it," her anguiſh ſoftened into tears.

The abbeſs led her from the church into her own parlour, and there adminiſtered all the conſolations, that religion and gentle ſympathy can give. Emily ſtruggled againſt the preſſure of grief; but the abbeſs, obſerving her attentively, ordered a bed to be prepared, and recommended her to retire to repoſe. She alſo kindly claimed her promiſe to remain a few days at the convent; and Emily, who had no wiſh to return to the cottage,

the

the ſcene of all her ſufferings, had leiſure, now that no immediate care preſſed upon her attention, to feel the indiſpoſition, which diſabled her from immediately travelling.

Meanwhile, the maternal kindneſs of the abbeſs, and the gentle attentions of the nuns did all, that was poſſible, towards ſoothing her ſpirits and reſtoring her health. But the latter was too deeply wounded, through the medium of her mind, to be quickly revived. She lingered for ſome weeks at the convent, under the influence of a ſlow fever, wiſhing to return home, yet unable to go thither; often even reluctant to leave the ſpot where her father's relics were depoſited, and ſometimes ſoothing herſelf with the conſideration, that, if ſhe died here, her remains would repoſe beſide thoſe of St. Aubert. In the meanwhile, ſhe ſent letters to Madame Cheron and to the old houſekeeper, informing them of the ſad event, that had taken place, and of her own ſituation. From her aunt ſhe received an anſwer, abounding more in common place condolement, than in traits of

real

real ſorrow, which aſſured her, that a ſervant ſhould be ſent to conduct her to La Vallée; for that her own time was ſo much occupied by company, that ſhe had no leiſure to undertake ſo long a journey. However Emily might prefer La Vallée to Tholouſe, ſhe could not be inſenſible of the indecorous and unkind conduct of her aunt, in ſuffering her to return thither, where ſhe had no longer a relation to conſole and protect her; a conduct, which was the more culpable, ſince St. Aubert had appointed Madame Cheron the guardian of his orphan daughter.

Madame Cheron's ſervant made the attendance of the good La Voiſin unneceſſary; and Emily, who felt ſenſibly her obligations to him, for all his kind attention to her late father, as well as to herſelf, was glad to ſpare him a long, and what, at his time of life, muſt have been a troubleſome journey.

During her ſtay at the convent, the peace and ſanctity that reigned within, the tranquil beauty of the ſcenery without, and the delicate

cate attentions of the abbeſs and the nuns, were circumſtances ſo ſoothing to her mind, that they almoſt tempted her to leave a world, where ſhe had loſt her deareſt friends, and devote herſelf to the cloiſter, in a ſpot, rendered ſacred to her by containing the tomb of St. Aubert. The penſive enthuſiaſm, too, ſo natural to her temper, had ſpread a beautiful illuſion over the ſanctified retirement of a nun, that almoſt hid from her view the ſelfiſhneſs of its ſecurity. But the touches, which a melancholy fancy, ſlightly tinctured with ſuperſtition, gave to the monaſtic ſcene, began to fade, as her ſpirits revived, and brought once more to her heart an image, which had only tranſiently been baniſhed thence. By this ſhe was ſilently awakened to hope and comfort and ſweet affections; viſions of happineſs gleamed faintly at a diſtance, and, though ſhe knew them to be illuſions, ſhe could not reſolve to ſhut them out for ever. It was the remembrance of Valancourt, of his taſte, his genius, and of the countenance which glowed with both, that,

that, perhaps, alone determined her to return to the world. The grandeur and ſublimity of the ſcenes, amidſt which they had firſt met, had faſcinated her fancy, and had imperceptibly contributed to render Valancourt more intereſting by ſeeming to communicate to him ſomewhat of their own character. The eſteem, too, which St. Aubert had repeatedly expreſſed for him, ſanctioned this kindneſs; but, though his countenance and manner had continually expreſſed his admiration of her, he had no otherwiſe declared it; and even the hope of ſeeing him again was ſo diſtant, that ſhe was ſcarcely conſcious of it, ſtill leſs that it influenced her conduct on this occaſion.

It was ſeveral days after the arrival of Madame Cheron's ſervant before Emily was ſufficiently recovered to undertake the journey to La Vallée. On the evening preceding her departure, ſhe went to the cottage to take leave of La Voiſin and his family, and to make them a return for their kindneſs. The old man ſhe found ſitting

on

on a bench at his door, between his daughter, and his ſon-in-law, who was juſt returned from his daily labour, and who was playing upon a pipe, that, in tone, reſembled an oboe. A flaſk of wine ſtood beſide the old man, and, before him, a ſmall table with fruit and bread, round which ſtood ſeveral of his grandſons, fine roſy children, who were taking their ſupper, as their mother diſtributed it. On the edge of the little green, that ſpread before the cottage, were cattle and a few ſheep repoſing under the trees. The landſcape was touched with the mellow light of the evening ſun, whoſe long ſlanting beams played through a viſta of the woods, and lighted up the diſtant turrets of the chateau. She pauſed a moment, before ſhe emerged from the ſhade, to gaze upon the happy group before her—on the complacency and eaſe of healthy age, depictured on the countenance of La Voiſin; the maternal tenderneſs of Agnes, as ſhe looked upon her children, and the innocency of infantine pleaſures, reflected in their ſmiles.

ſmiles. Emily looked again at the venerable old man, and at the cottage; the memory of her father roſe with full force upon her mind, and ſhe haſtily ſtepped forward, afraid to truſt herſelf with a longer pauſe. She took an affectionate and affecting leave of La Voiſin and his family; he ſeemed to love her as his daughter, and ſhed tears; Emily ſhed many. She avoided going into the cottage, ſince ſhe knew it would revive emotions, ſuch as ſhe could not now endure.

One painful ſcene yet awaited her, for ſhe determined to viſit again her father's grave; and that ſhe might not be interrupted, or obſerved in the indulgence of her melancholy tenderneſs, ſhe deferred her viſit, till every inhabitant of the convent, except the nun who promiſed to bring her the key of the church, ſhould be retired to reſt. Emily remained in her chamber, till ſhe heard the convent bell ſtrike twelve, when the nun came, as ſhe had appointed, with the key of a private door, that opened into the church, and they deſcended togetehr the narrow winding

winding ſtair-caſe, that led thither. The nun offered to accompany Emily to the grave, adding, "It is melancholy to go alone at this hour;" but the former, thanking her for the conſideration, could not conſent to have any witneſs of her ſorrow; and the ſiſter, having unlocked the door, gave her the lamp. "You will remember, ſiſter," ſaid ſhé, "that in the eaſt aiſle, which you muſt paſs, is a newly opened grave; hold the light to the ground, that you may not ſtumble over the looſe earth." Emily, thanking her again, took the lamp, and, ſtepping into the church, ſiſter Mariette departed. But Emily pauſed a moment at the door; a ſudden fear came over her, and ſhe returned to the foot of the ſtair-caſe, where, as ſhe heard the ſteps of the nun aſcending, and, while ſhe held up the lamp, ſaw her black veil waving over the ſpiral baluſters, ſhe was tempted to call her back. While ſhe heſitated, the veil diſappeared, and, in the next moment, aſhamed of her fears, ſhe returned to the church. The cold

air of the aiſles chilled her, and their deep ſilence and extent, feebly ſhone upon by the moon-light, that ſtreamed through a diſtant gothic window, would at any other time have awed her into ſuperſtition; now, grief occupied all herattention. She ſcarcely heard the whiſpering echoes of her own ſteps, or thought of the open grave, till ſhe found herſelf almoſt on its brink. A friar of the convent had been buried there on the preceding evening, and, as ſhe had ſat alone in her chamber at twilight, ſhe heard, at diſtance, the monks chanting the requiem for his ſoul. This brought freſhly to her memory the circumſtances of her father's death; and, as the voices, mingling with a low querulous peal of the organ, ſwelled faintly, gloomy and affecting viſions had ariſen upon her mind. Now ſhe remembered them, and, turning aſide to avoid the broken ground, theſe recollections made her paſs on with quicker ſteps to the grave of St. Aubert, when in the moon-light, that fell athwart a remote part of the aiſle, ſhe thought ſhe ſaw a ſhadow

a ſhadow gliding between the pillars. She ſtopped to liſten, and, not hearing any foot-ſtep, believed that her fancy had deceived her, and, no longer apprehenſive of being obſerved, proceeded. St. Aubert was buried beneath a plain marble, bearing little more than his name and the date of his birth and death, near the foot of the ſtately monument of the Villerois. Emily remained at his grave, till a chime, that called the monks to early prayers, warned her to retire; then, ſhe wept over it a laſt farewel, and forced herſelf from the ſpot. After this hour of melancholy indulgence, ſhe was refreſhed by a deeper ſleep, than ſhe had experienced for a long time, and, on awakening, her mind was more tranquil and reſigned, than it had been ſince St. Aubert's death.

But, when the moment of her departure from the convent arrived, all her grief returned; the memory of the dead, and the kindneſs of the living attached her to the place; and for the ſacred ſpot, where her father's remains were interred, ſhe ſeemed to

feel all thoſe tender affections which we conceive for home. The abbeſs repeated many kind aſſurances of regard at their parting, and preſſed her to return, if ever ſhe ſhould find her condition elſewhere unpleaſant; many of the nuns alſo expreſſed unaffected regret at her departure, and Emily left the convent with many tears, and followed by ſincere wiſhes for her happineſs.

She had travelled ſeveral leagues, before the ſcenes of the country, through which ſhe paſſed, had power to rouſe her for a moment from the deep melancholy, into which ſhe was ſunk, and, when they did, it was only to remind her, that, on her laſt view of them, St. Aubert was at her ſide, and to call up to her remembrance the remarks he had delivered on ſimilar ſcenery. Thus, without any particular occurrence, paſſed the day in languor and dejection. She ſlept that night at a town on the ſkirts of Languedoc, and, on the following morning, entered Gaſcony.

Towards the cloſe of this day, Emily came within view of the plains in the neighbourhood

bourhood of La Vallée, and the well-known objects of former times began to preſs upon her notice, and with them recollections, that awakened all her tenderneſs and grief. Often, while ſhe looked through her tears upon the wild grandeur of the Pyrenées, now varied with the rich lights and ſhadows of evening, ſhe remembered, that, when laſt ſhe ſaw them, her father partook with her of the pleaſure they inſpired. Suddenly ſome ſcene, which he had particularly pointed out to her, would preſent itſelf, and the ſick languor of deſpair would ſteal upon her heart. "There!" ſhe would exclaim, "there are the very cliffs, there the wood of pines, which he looked at with ſuch delight, as we paſſed this road together for the laſt time. There, too, under the crag of that mountain, is the cottage, peeping from among the cedars, which he bade me remember, and copy with my pencil. O my father, ſhall I never ſee you more!"

As ſhe drew near the chateau, theſe melancholy memorials of paſt times multiplied.

At length, the chateau itſelf appeared amid the glowing beauty of St. Aubert's favourite landſcape. This was an object, which called for fortitude, not for tears; Emily dried hers, and prepared to meet with calmneſs the trying moment of her return to that home, where there was no longer a parent to welcome her. "Yes," ſaid ſhe, "let me not forget the leſſons he has taught me! How often he has pointed out the neceſſity of reſiſting even virtuous ſorrow; how often we have admired together the greatneſs of a mind, that can at once ſuffer and reaſon! O my father! if you are permitted to look down upon your child, it will pleaſe you to ſee, that ſhe remembers, and endeavours to practiſe, the precepts you have given her."

A turn on the road now allowed a nearer view of the chateau, the chimneys, tipped with light, riſing from behind St. Aubert's favourite oaks, whoſe foliage partly concealed the lower part of the building. Emily could not ſuppreſs a heavy ſigh. "This, too,

too, was his favourite hour," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe gazed upon the long evening ſhadows, ſtretched athwart the landſcape. "How deep the repoſe, how lovely the ſcene! lovely and tranquil as in former days!"

Again ſhe reſiſted the preſſure of ſorrow, till her ear caught the gay melody of the dance, which ſhe had ſo often liſtened to, as ſhe walked with St. Aubert, on the margin of the Garonne, when all her fortitude forſook her, and ſhe continued to weep, till the carriage ſtopped at the little gate, that opened upon what was now her own territory. She raiſed her eyes on the ſudden ſtopping of the carriage, and ſaw her father's old houſekeeper coming to open the gate. Manchon alſo came running, and barking before her; and, when his young miſtreſs alighted, fawned, and played round her, gaſping with joy.

"Dear ma'amſelle!" ſaid Thereſa, and pauſed, and looked as if ſhe would have offered ſomething of condolement to Emily, whoſe tears now prevented reply. The dog

ſtill fawned and ran round her, and then flew towards the carriage, with a ſhort quick bark. "Ah, ma'amſelle! my poor maſter!" ſaid Thereſa, whoſe feelings were more awakened than her delicacy, "Manchon's gone to look for him." Emily ſobbed aloud; and, on looking towards the carriage, which ſtill ſtood with the door open, ſaw the animal ſpring into it, and inſtantly leap out, and then with his noſe on the ground run round the horſes.

"Don't cry ſo, ma'amſelle," ſaid Thereſa, "it breaks my heart to ſee you." The dog now came running to Emily, then returned to the carriage, and then back again to her, whining and diſcontented. "Poor rogue!" ſaid Thereſa, "thou haſt loſt thy maſter, thou mayſt well cry! But come, my dear young lady, be comforted. What ſhall I get to refreſh you?" Emily gave her hand to the old ſervant, and tried to reſtrain her grief, while ſhe made ſome kind enquiries concerning her health. But ſhe ſtill lingered in the walk which led to the

chateau,

chateau, for within was no perſon to meet her with the kiſs of affection; her own heart no longer palpitated with impatient joy to meet again the well-known ſmile, and ſhe dreaded to ſee objects, which would recall the full remembrance of her former happineſs. She moved ſlowly towards the door, pauſed, went on, and pauſed again. How ſilent, how forſaken, how forlorn did the chateau appear! Trembling to enter it, yet blaming herſelf for delaying what ſhe could not avoid, ſhe, at length, paſſed into the hall; croſſed it with a hurried ſtep, as if afraid to look round, and opened the door of that room, which ſhe was wont to call her own. The gloom of evening gave ſolemnity to its ſilent and deſerted air. The chairs, the tables, every article of furniture, ſo familiar to her in happier times, ſpoke eloquently to her heart. She ſeated herſelf, without immediately obſerving it, in a window, which opened upon the garden, and where St. Aubert had often ſat with her, watching the ſun retire from the rich and

extenſive proſpect, that appeared beyond the groves.

Having indulged her tears for ſome time, ſhe became more compoſed; and, when Thereſa, after ſeeing the baggage depoſited in her lady's room, again appeared, ſhe had ſo far recovered her ſpirits, as to be able to converſe with her.

"I have made up the green bed for you, ma'amſelle," ſaid Thereſa, as ſhe ſet the coffee upon the table. "I thought you would like it better than your own now; but I little thought this day month, that you would come back alone. A-well a day! the news almoſt broke my heart, when it did come. Who would have believed, that my poor maſter, when he went from home, would never return again!" Emily hid her face with her handkerchief, and waved her hand.

"Do taſte the coffee," ſaid Thereſa. "My dear young lady, be comforted—we muſt all die. My dear maſter is a ſaint above." Emily took the handkerchief

from her face, and raiſed her eyes full of tears towards heaven; ſoon after ſhe dried them, and, in a calm, but tremulous voice, began to enquire concerning ſome of her late father's penſioners.

"Alas-a-day!" ſaid Thereſa, as ſhe poured out the coffee, and handed it to her miſtreſs, "all that could come, have been here every day to enquire after you and my maſter." She then proceeded to tell, that ſome were dead whom they had left well; and others, who were ill, had recovered. "And ſee, ma'amſelle," added Thereſa, "there is old Mary coming up the garden now; ſhe has looked every day theſe three years as if ſhe would die, yet ſhe is alive ſtill. She has ſeen the chaiſe at the door, and knows you are come home."

The ſight of this poor old woman would have been too much for Emily, and ſhe begged Thereſa would go and tell her, that ſhe was too ill to ſee any perſon that night. "To-morrow I ſhall be better, perhaps;

but give her this token of my remembrance."

Emily ſat for ſome time, given up to ſorrow. Not an object, on which her eye glanced, but awakened ſome remembrance, that led immediately to the ſubject of her grief. Her favourite plants, which St. Aubert had taught her to nurſe; the little drawings, that adorned the room, which his taſte had inſtructed her to execute; the books, that he had ſelected for her uſe, and which they had read together; her muſical inſtruments, whoſe ſounds he loved ſo well, and which he ſometimes awakened himſelf —every object gave new force to ſorrow. At length, ſhe rouſed herſelf from this melancholy indulgence, and, ſummoning all her reſolution, ſtepped forward to go into thoſe forlorn rooms, which, though ſhe dreaded to enter, ſhe knew would yet more powerfully affect her, if ſhe delayed to viſit them.

Having paſſed through the green-houſe, her courage for a moment forſook her, when ſhe

ſhe opened the door of the library; and, perhaps, the ſhade, which evening and the foliage of the trees near the windows threw acroſs the room, heightened the ſolemnity of her feelings on entering that apartment, where every thing ſpoke of her father. There was an arm-chair, in which he uſed to ſit; ſhe ſhrunk when ſhe obſerved it, for ſhe had ſo often ſeen him ſeated there, and the idea of him roſe ſo diſtinctly to her mind, that ſhe almoſt fancied ſhe ſaw him before her. But ſhe checked the illuſions of a diſtempered imagination, though ſhe could not ſubdue a certain degree of awe, which now mingled with her emotions. She walked ſlowly to the chair, and ſeated herſelf in it; there was a reading-deſk before it, on which lay a book open, as it had been left by her father. It was ſome moments before ſhe recovered courage enough to examine it; and, when ſhe looked at the open page, ſhe immediately recollected, that Sir Aubert, on the evening before his departure from the chateau, had read to her ſome paſ-

ſages

ſages from this his favourite author. The circumſtance now affected her extremely; ſhe looked at the page, wept, and looked again. To her the book appeared ſacred and invaluable, and ſhe would not have moved it, or cloſed the page, which he had left open, for the treaſures of the Indies. Still ſhe ſat before the deſk, and could not reſolve to quit it, though the increaſing gloom, and the profound ſilence of the apartment, revived a degree of painful awe. Her thoughts dwelt on the probable ſtate of departed ſpirits, and ſhe remembered the affecting converſation, which had paſſed between St. Aubert and La Voiſin, on the night preceding his death.

As ſhe muſed ſhe ſaw the door ſlowly open, and a ruſtling ſound in a remote part of the room ſtartled her. Through the duſk ſhe thought ſhe perceived ſomething move. The ſubject ſhe had been conſidering, and the preſent tone of her ſpirits, which made her imagination reſpond to every impreſſion of her ſenſes, gave her a ſudden

ſudden terror of ſomething ſupernatural. She ſat for a moment motionleſs, and then, her diſſipated reaſon returning, "What ſhould I fear?" ſaid ſhe. "If the ſpirits of thoſe we love ever return to us, it is in kindneſs."

The ſilence, which again reigned, made her aſhamed of her late fears, and ſhe believed, that her imagination had deluded her, or that ſhe had heard one of thoſe unaccountable noiſes, which ſometimes occur in old houſes. The ſame ſound, however, returned; and, diſtinguiſhing ſomething moving towards her, and in the next inſtant preſs beſide her into the chair, ſhe ſhrieked; but her fleeting ſenſes were inſtantly recalled, on perceiving that it was Manchon who ſat by her, and who now licked her hands affectionately.

Perceiving her ſpirits unequal to the taſk ſhe had aſſigned herſelf of viſiting the deſerted rooms of the chateau this night, when ſhe left the library, ſhe walked into the garden, and down to the terrace, that overhung the

the river. The ſun was now ſet; but, under the dark branches of the almond trees, was ſeen the ſaffron glow of the weſt, ſpreading beyond the twilight of middle air. The bat flitted ſilently by; and, now and then, the mourning note of the nightingale was heard. The circumſtances of the hour brought to her recollection ſome lines, which ſhe had once heard St. Aubert recite on this very ſpot, and ſhe had now a melancholy pleaſure in repeating them.

SONNET.

Now the bat circles on the breeze of eve,
That creeps, in ſhudd'ring fits, along the wave,
And trembles 'mid the woods, and through the cave
Whoſe lonely ſighs the wanderer deceive;
For oft, when melancholy charms his mind,
He thinks the Spirit of the rock he hears,
Nor liſtens, but with ſweetly-thrilling fears,
To the low, myſtic murmurs of the wind!
Now the bat circles, and the twilight-dew
Falls ſilent round, and, o'er the mountain-cliff,
The gleaming wave and far-diſcover'd ſkiff,
Spreads the gray veil of ſoft, harmonious hue.
So falls o'er Grief the dew of pity's tear,
Dimming her lonely viſions of deſpair.

Emily,

Emily, wandering on, came to St. Aubert's favourite plane-tree, where ſo often, at this hour, they had ſat beneath the ſhade together, and with her dear mother ſo often had converſed on the ſubject of a future ſtate. How often, too, had her father expreſſed the comfort he derived from believing, that they ſhould meet in another world! Emily, overcome by theſe recollections, left the plane-tree, and, as ſhe leaned penſively on the wall of the terrace, ſhe obſerved a group of peaſants dancing gaily on the banks of the Garonne, which ſpread in broad expanſe below, and reflected the evening light. What a contraſt they formed to the deſolate, unhappy Emily! They were gay and *debonnaire*, as they were wont to be when ſhe, too, was gay—when St. Aubert uſed to liſten to their merry muſic, with a countenance beaming pleaſure and benevolence. Emily, having looked for a moment on this ſprightly band, turned away, unable to bear the remembrances it excited; but where, alas! could ſhe turn,

and

and not meet new objects to give acuteneſs to grief?

As ſhe walked ſlowly towards the houſe, ſhe was met by Thereſa. "Dear ma'amſelle," ſaid ſhe, "I have been ſeeking you up and down this half hour, and was afraid ſome accident had happened to you. How can you like to wander about ſo in this night air! Do come into the houſe. Think what my poor maſter would have ſaid, if he could ſee you. I am ſure, when my dear lady died, no gentleman could take it more to heart than he did, yet you know he ſeldom ſhed a tear."

"Pray, Thereſa, ceaſe," ſaid Emily, wiſhing to interrupt this ill-judged, but well-meaning harangue; Thereſa's loquacity, however, was not to be ſilenced ſo eaſily. "And when you uſed to grieve ſo," ſhe added, "he often told you how wrong it was—for that my miſtreſs was happy. And, if ſhe was happy, I am ſure he is ſo too; for the prayers of the poor, they ſay, reach heaven." During this ſpeech, Emily had

had walked ſilently into the chateau, and Thereſa lighted her acroſs the hall into the common ſitting parlour, where ſhe had laid the cloth, with one ſolitary knife and fork, for ſupper. Emily was in the room before ſhe perceived that it was not her own apartment, but ſhe checked the emotion which inclined her to leave it, and ſeated herſelf quietly by the little ſupper table. Her father's hat hung upon the oppoſite wall; while ſhe gazed at it, a faintneſs came over her. Thereſa looked at her, and then at the object, on which her eyes were ſettled, and went to remove it; but Emily waved her hand—"No," ſaid ſhe, "let it remain. I am going to my chamber." "Nay, ma'amſelle, ſupper is ready." "I cannot take it," replied Emily, "I will go to my room, and try to ſleep. To-morrow I ſhall be better."

"This is poor doings!" ſaid Thereſa. "Dear lady! do take ſome food! I have dreſſed a pheaſant, and a fine one it is. Old Monſieur Barreaux ſent it this morning, for

I ſaw

I ſaw him yeſterday, and told him you were coming. And I know nobody that ſeemed more concerned, when he heard the ſad news, than he."

"Did he?" ſaid Emily, in a tender voice, while ſhe felt her poor heart warmed for a moment by a ray of ſympathy.

At length her ſpirits were entirely overcome, and ſhe retired to her room.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

"Can Muſic's voice, can Beauty's eye,
Can Painting's glowing hand ſupply
A charm ſo ſuited to my mind,
As blows this hollow guſt of wind?
As drops this little weeping rill,
Soft tinkling down the moſs-grown hill;
While, thro' the weſt, where ſinks the crimſon day,
Meek Twilight ſlowly ſails, and waves her banners gray?"

MASON.

EMILY, ſome time after her return to La Vallée, received letters from her aunt, Madame Cheron, in which, after ſome common-place condolement and advice, ſhe invited her to Tholouſe, and added, that, as her late brother had entruſted Emily's *education* to her, ſhe ſhould conſider herſelf bound to overlook her conduct. Emily, at this time, wiſhed only to remain at La Vallée,

Vallée, in the ſcenes of her early happineſs, now rendered infinitely dear to her, as the late reſidence of thoſe, whom ſhe had loſt for ever, where ſhe could weep unobſerved, retrace their ſteps, and remember each minute particular of their manners. But ſhe was equally anxious to avoid the diſpleaſure of Madame Cheron.

Though her affection would not ſuffer her to queſtion, even a moment, the propriety of St. Aubert's conduct in appointing Madame for her guardian, ſhe was ſenſible, that this ſtep had made her happineſs depend, in a great degree, on the humour of her aunt. In her reply, ſhe begged permiſſion to remain, at preſent, at La Vallée, mentioning the extreme dejection of her ſpirits, and the neceſſity ſhe felt for quiet and retirement to reſtore them. Theſe, ſhe knew were not to be found at Madame Cheron's, whoſe inclinations led her into a life of diſſipation, which her ample fortune encouraged; and, having given her anſwer, ſhe felt ſomewhat more at eaſe.

In the firſt days of her affliction, ſhe was viſited by Monſieur Barreaux, a ſincere mourner for St. Aubert. " I may well lament my friend," ſaid he, " for I ſhall never meet with his reſemblance. If I could have found ſuch a man in what is called ſociety, I ſhould not have left it."

M. Barreaux's admiration of her father endeared him extremely to Emily, whoſe heart found almoſt its firſt relief in converſing of her parents, with a man, whom ſhe ſo much revered, and who, though with ſuch an ungracious appearance, poſſeſſed ſo much goodneſs of heart and delicacy of mind.

Several weeks paſſed away in quiet retirement, and Emily's affliction began to ſoften into melancholy. She could bear to read the books ſhe had before read with her father; to ſit in his chair in the library—to watch the flowers his hand had planted—to awaken the tones of that inſtrument his fingers had preſſed, and ſometimes even to play his favourite air.

When

When her mind had recovered from the firſt ſhock of affliction, perceiving the danger of yielding to indolence, and that activity alone could reſtore its tone, ſhe ſcrupulouſly endeavoured to paſs all her hours in employment. And it was now that ſhe underſtood the full value of the education ſhe had received from St. Aubert, for in cultivating her underſtanding he had ſecured her an aſylum from indolence, without recourſe to diſſipation, and rich and varied amuſement and information, independent of the ſociety, from which her ſituation ſecluded her. Nor were the good effects of this education confined to ſelfiſh advantages, ſince, St. Aubert having nouriſhed every amiable quality of her heart, it now expanded in benevolence to all around her, and taught her, when ſhe could not remove the misfortunes of others, at leaſt to ſoften them by ſympathy and tenderneſs;—a benevolence that taught her to feel for all, that could ſuffer.

Madame Cheron returned no anſwer to Emily's letter, who began to hope, that ſhe ſhould

ſhould be permitted to remain ſome time longer in her retirement, and her mind had now ſo far recovered its ſtrength, that ſhe ventured to view the ſcenes, which moſt powerfully recalled the images of paſt times. Among theſe was the fiſhing-houſe; and, to indulge ſtill more the affectionate melancholy of the viſit, ſhe took thither her lute, that ſhe might again hear there the tones, to which St. Aubert and her mother had ſo often delighted to liſten. She went alone, and at that ſtill hour of the evening, which is ſo ſoothing to fancy and to grief. The laſt time ſhe had been here ſhe was in company with Monſieur and Madame St. Aubert, a few days preceding that, on which the latter was ſeized with a fatal illneſs. Now, when Emily again entered the woods, that ſurrounded the building, they awakened ſo forcibly the memory of former times, that her reſolution yielded for a moment to exceſs of grief. She ſtopped, leaned for ſupport againſt a tree, and wept for ſome minutes, before ſhe had recovered herſelf

ſufficiently to proceed. The little path, that led to the building, was overgrown with graſs, and the flowers which St. Aubert had ſcattered careleſsly along the border were almoſt choked with weeds—the tall thiſtle —the fox-glove and the nettle. She often pauſed to look on the deſolate ſpot, now ſo ſilent and forſaken; and when, with a trembling hand, ſhe opened the door of the fiſhing-houſe, "Ah!" ſaid ſhe, "every thing—every thing remains as when I left it laſt—left it with thoſe who never muſt return!" She went to a window, that overhung the rivulet, and, leaning over it, with her eyes fixed on the current, was ſoon loſt in melancholy reverie. The lute ſhe had brought lay forgotten beſide her; the mournful ſighing of the breeze, as it waved the high pines above, and its ſofter whiſpers among the oſiers, that bowed upon the banks below, was a kind of muſic more in uniſon with her feelings. It did not vibrate on the chords of unhappy memory, but was ſoothing to the heart as the voice of Pity. She

continued to muſe, unconſcious of the gloom of evening, and that the ſun's laſt light trembled on the heights above, and would probably have remained ſo much longer, if a ſudden footſtep, without the building, had not alarmed her attention, and firſt made her recollect that ſhe was unprotected. In the next moment, a door opened, and a ſtranger appeared, who ſtopped on perceiving Emily, and then began to apologize for his intruſion. But Emily, at the ſound of his voice, loſt her fear in a ſtronger emotion; its tones were familiar to her ear, and, though ſhe could not readily diſtinguiſh through the duſk the features of the perſon who ſpoke, ſhe felt a remembrance too ſtrong to be diſtruſted.

He repeated his apology, and Emily then ſaid ſomething in reply, when the ſtranger, eagerly advancing, exclaimed, "Good God! can it be—ſurely I am not miſtaken—ma'amſelle St. Aubert—is it not?"

"It is indeed," ſaid Emily, who was confirmed in her firſt conjecture, for ſhe

now diſtinguiſhed the countenance of Valancourt, lighted up with ſtill more than its uſual animation. A thouſand painful recollections crowded to her mind, and the effort, which ſhe made to ſupport herſelf, only ſerved to increaſe her agitation. Valancourt, meanwhile, having enquired anxiouſly after her health, and expreſſed his hopes, that M. St. Aubert had found benefit from travelling, learned from the flood of tears, which ſhe could no longer repreſs, the fatal truth. He led her to a ſeat, and ſat down by her, while Emily continued to weep, and Valancourt to hold the hand, which ſhe was unconſcious he had taken, till it was wet with the tears which grief for St. Aubert and ſympathy for herſelf had called forth.

"I feel," ſaid he at length, "I feel how inſufficient all attempt at conſolation muſt be on this ſubject. I can only mourn with you, for I cannot doubt the ſource of your tears. Would to God I were miſtaken!"

Emily could ſtill anſwer only by tears, till

till ſhe roſe, and begged they might leave the melancholy ſpot, when Valancourt, though he ſaw her feebleneſs, could not offer to detain her, but took her arm within his, and led her from the fiſhing-houſe. They walked ſilently through the woods, Valancourt anxious to know, yet fearing to aſk any particulars concerning St. Aubert; and Emily too much diſtreſſed to converſe. After ſome time, however, ſhe acquired fortitude enough to ſpeak of her father, and to give a brief account of the manner of his death; during which recital Valancourt's countenance betrayed ſtrong emotion, and, when he heard that St. Aubert had died on the road, and that Emily had been left among ſtrangers, he preſſed her hand between his, and involuntarily exclaimed, "Why was I not there!" but in the next moment recollected himſelf, for he immediately returned to the mention of her father; till, perceiving that her ſpirits were exhauſted, he gradually changed the ſubject, and ſpoke of himſelf. Emily thus learned,

that, after they had parted, he had wandered, for ſome time, along the ſhores of the Mediterranean, and had then returned through Languedoc into Gaſcony, which was his native province, and where he uſually reſided.

When he had concluded his little narrative, he ſunk into a ſilence, which Emily was not diſpoſed to interrupt, and it continued, till they reached the gate of the chateau, when he ſtopped, as if he had known this to be the limit of his walk. Here, ſaying that it was his intention to return to Eſtuviere on the following day, he aſked her if ſhe would permit him to take leave of her in the morning; and Emily, perceiving that ſhe could not reject an ordinary civility, without expreſſing by her refuſal an expectation of ſomething more, was compelled to anſwer, that ſhe ſhould be at home.

She paſſed a melancholy evening, during which the retroſpect of all that had happened, ſince ſhe had ſeen Valancourt, would riſe to her imagination; and the ſcene of her father's

father's death appeared in tints as freſh, as if it had paſſed on the preceding day. She remembered particularly the earneſt and ſolemn manner, in which he had required her to deſtroy the manuſcript papers; and, awakening from the lethargy, in which ſorrow had held her, ſhe was ſhocked to think ſhe had nót yet obeyed him, and determined, that another day ſhould not reproach her with the neglect.

CHAP. XI.

"Can ſuch things be,
And overcome us like a ſummer's cloud,
Without our ſpecial wonder?"

MACBETH.

ON the next morning, Emily ordered a fire to be lighted in the ſtove of the chamber, where St. Aubert uſed to ſleep; and, as ſoon as ſhe had breakfaſted, went thither to burn the papers. Having faſtened the door to prevent interruption, ſhe opened the cloſet where they were concealed; as ſhe entered which, ſhe felt an emotion of unuſual awe, and ſtood for ſome moments ſurveying it, trembling, and almoſt afraid to remove the board. There was a great chair in one corner of the cloſet, and, oppoſite to it, ſtood the table, at which ſhe had ſeen her father ſit, on the evening that preceded his departure, looking over, with

with ſo much emotion, what ſhe believed to be theſe very papers.

The ſolitary life, which Emily had led of late, and the melancholy ſubjects, on which ſhe had ſuffered her thoughts to dwell, had rendered her at times ſenſible to the "thick-coming fancies" of a mind greatly enervated. It was lamentable, that her excellent underſtanding ſhould have yielded, even for a moment, to the reveries of ſuperſtition, or rather to thoſe ſtarts of imagination, which deceive the ſenſes into what can be called nothing leſs than momentary madneſs. Inſtances of this temporary failure of mind had more than once occurred ſince her return home; particularly when, wandering through this lonely manſion in the evening twilight, ſhe had been alarmed by appearances, which would have been unſeen in her more cheerful days. To this infirm ſtate of her nerves may be attributed what ſhe imagined, when, her eyes glancing a ſecond time on the arm-chair, which ſtood in an obſcure part of the cloſet, the

countenance of her dead father appeared there. Emily ſtood fixed for a moment to the floor, after which ſhe left the cloſet. Her ſpirits, however, ſoon returned; ſhe reproached herſelf with the weakneſs of thus ſuffering interruption in an act of ſerious importance, and again opened the door. By the directions which St. Aubert had given her, ſhe readily found the board he had deſcribed in an oppoſite corner of the cloſet, near the window; ſhe diſtinguiſhed alſo the line he had mentioned, and preſſing it as he had bade her, it ſlid down, and diſcloſed the bundle of papers, together with ſome ſcattered ones, and the purſe of louis. With a trembling hand ſhe removed them, replaced the board, pauſed a moment, and was riſing from the floor, when, on looking up, there appeared to her alarmed fancy the ſame countenance in the chair. The illuſion, another inſtance of the unhappy effect which ſolitude and grief had gradually produced upon her mind, ſubdued her ſpirits; ſhe ruſhed forward

ward into the chamber, and ſunk almoſt ſenſeleſs into a chair. Returning reaſon ſoon overcame the dreadful, but pitiable attack of imagination, and ſhe turned to the papers, though ſtill with ſo little recollection, that her eyes involuntarily ſettled on the writing of ſome looſe ſheets, which lay open; and ſhe was unconſcious, that ſhe was tranſgreſſing her father's ſtrict injunction, till a ſentence of dreadful import awakened her attention and her memory together. She haſtily put the papers from her; but the words, which had rouſed equally her curioſity and terror, ſhe could not diſmiſs from her thoughts. So powerfully had they affected her, that ſhe even could not reſolve to deſtroy the papers immediately; and the more ſhe dwelt on the circumſtance, the more it inflamed her imagination. Urged by the moſt forcible, and apparently the moſt neceſſary, curioſity to enquire farther, concerning the terrible and myſterious ſubject, to which ſhe had ſeen an alluſion, ſhe began to lament her pro-

miſe to deſtroy the papers. For a moment, ſhe even doubted, whether it could juſtly be obeyed, in contradiction to ſuch reaſons as there appeared to be for further information. But the deluſion was momentary.

"I have given a ſolemn promiſe," ſaid ſhe, "to obſerve a ſolemn injunction, and it is not my buſineſs to argue, but to obey. Let me haſten to remove the temptation, that would deſtroy my innocence, and embitter my life with the conſciouſneſs of irremediable guilt, while I have ſtrength to reject it."

Thus re-animated with a ſenſe of her duty, ſhe completed the triumph of integrity over temptation, more forcible than any ſhe had ever known, and conſigned the papers to the flames. Her eyes watched them as they ſlowly conſumed, ſhe ſhuddered at the recollection of the ſentence ſhe had juſt ſeen, and at the certainty, that the only opportunity of explaining it was then paſſing away for ever.

It was long after this, that ſhe recollected the purſe; and as ſhe was depoſiting it, unopened, in a cabinet, perceiving that it contained ſomething of a ſize larger than coin, ſhe examined it. "His hand depoſited them here," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe kiſſed ſome pieces of the coin, and wetted them with her tears, "his hand—which is now duſt!" At the bottom of the purſe was a ſmall packet, having taken out which, and unfolded paper after paper, ſhe found to be an ivory caſe, containing the miniature of a —lady! She ſtarted—"The ſame," ſaid ſhe, "my father wept over!" On examining the countenance ſhe could recollect no perſon that it reſembled. It was of uncommon beauty, and was characterized by an expreſſion of ſweetneſs, ſhaded with ſorrow, and tempered by reſignation.

St. Aubert had given no directions concerning this picture, nor had even named it; ſhe, therefore, thought herſelf juſtified in preſerving it. More than once remembering his manner, when he had ſpoken of the

the Marchioneſs of Villeroi, ſhe felt inclined to believe that this was her reſemblance; yet there appeared no reaſon why he ſhould have preſerved a picture of that lady, or, having preſerved it, why he ſhould lament over it in a manner ſo ſtriking and affecting as ſhe had witneſſed on the night preceding his departure.

Emily ſtill gazed on the countenance, examining its features, but ſhe knew not where to detect the charm that captivated her attention, and inſpired ſentiments of ſuch love and pity. Dark brown hair played careleſsly along the open forehead; the noſe was rather inclined to aquiline; the lips ſpoke in a ſmile, but it was a melancholy one; the eyes were blue, and were directed upwards with an expreſſion of peculiar meekneſs, while the ſoft cloud of the brow ſpoke the fine ſenſibility of the temper.

Emily was rouſed from the muſing mood into which the picture had thrown her, by the cloſing of the garden gate; and, on turning her eyes to the window, ſhe ſaw Valancourt

Valancourt coming towards the chateau. Her ſpirits agitated by the ſubjects that had lately occupied her mind, ſhe felt unprepared to ſee him, and remained a few moments in the chamber to recover herſelf.

When ſhe met him in the parlour, ſhe was ſtruck with the change that appeared in his air and countenance ſince they had parted in Rouſillon, which twilight and the diſtreſs ſhe ſuffered on the preceding evening had prevented her from obſerving. But dejection and languor diſappeared, for a moment, in the ſmile that now enlightened his countenance, on perceiving her. "You ſee," ſaid he, "I have availed myſelf of the permiſſion with which you honoured me —of bidding *you* farewell, whom I had the happineſs of meeting only yeſterday."

Emily ſmiled faintly, and, anxious to ſay ſomething, aſked if he had been long in Gaſcony. "A few days only," replied Valancourt, while a bluſh paſſed over his cheek. "I engaged in a long ramble after I had the misfortune of parting with the friends

friends who had made my wanderings among the Pyrenées ſo delightful."

A tear came to Emily's eye, as Valancourt ſaid this, which he obſerved; and, anxious to draw off her attention from the remembrance that had occaſioned it, as well as ſhocked at his own thoughtleſſneſs, he began to ſpeak on other ſubjects; expreſſing his admiration of the chateau, and its proſpects. Emily, who felt ſomewhat embarraſſed how to ſupport a converſation, was glad of ſuch an opportunity to continue it on different topics. They walked down to the terrace, where Valancourt was charmed with the river ſcenery, and the views over the oppoſite ſhores of Guienne.

As he leaned on the wall of the terrace, watching the rapid current of the Garonne, "I was a few weeks ago," ſaid he, "at the ſource of this noble river; I had not then the happineſs of knowing you, or I ſhould have regretted your abſence—it was a ſcene ſo exactly ſuited to your taſte. It riſes in a part of the Pyrenées, ſtill wilder and more ſublime,

ſublime, I think, than any we paſſed in the way to Rouſillon." He then deſcribed its fall among the precipices of the mountains, where its waters, augmented by the ſtreams that deſcend from the ſnowy ſummits around, ruſh into the Vallée d'Aran, between whoſe romantic heights it foams along, purſuing its way to the north weſt till it emerges upon the plains of Languedoc. Then, waſhing the walls of Tholouſe, and turning again to the north weſt, it aſſumes a milder character, as it fertilizes the paſtures of Gaſcony and Guienne, in its progreſs to the Bay of Biſcay.

Emily and Valancourt talked of the ſcenes they had paſſed among the Pyrenean Alps; as he ſpoke of which there was often a tremulous tenderneſs in his voice, and ſometimes he expatiated on them with all the fire of genius, ſometimes would appear ſcarcely conſcious of the topic, though he continued to ſpeak. This ſubject recalled forcibly to Emily the idea of her father, whoſe image appeared in every landſcape, which Valancourt

court particularized, whoſe remarks dwelt upon her memory, nd whoſe enthuſiaſm ſtill glowed in her heart. Her ſilence, at length, reminded Valancourt how nearly his converſation approached to the occaſion of her grief, and he changed the ſubject, though for one ſcarcely leſs affecting to Emily. When he admired the grandeur of the plane-tree, that ſpread its wide branches over the terrace, and under whoſe ſhade they now ſat, ſhe remembered how often ſhe had ſat thus with St. Aubert, and heard him expreſs the ſame admiration.

"This was a favourite tree with my dear father," ſaid ſhe; "he uſed to love to ſit under its foliage with his family about him, in the fine evenings of ſummer."

Valancourt underſtood her feelings, and was ſilent; had ſhe raiſed her eyes from the ground ſhe would have ſeen tears in his. He roſe, and leaned on the wall of the terrace, from which, in a few moments, he returned to his ſeat, then roſe again, and appeared to be greatly agitated; while Emily found

found her ſpirits ſo much depreſſed, that ſeveral of her attempts to renew the converſation were ineffectual. Valancourt again ſat down, but was ſtill ſilent, and trembled. At length he ſaid, with a heſitating voice, "This lovely ſcene!—I am going to leave—to leave you—perhaps for ever! Theſe moments may never return; I cannot reſolve to neglect, though I ſcarcely dare to avail myſelf of them. Let me, however, without offending the delicacy of your ſorrow, venture to declare the admiration I muſt always feel of your goodneſs—O! that at ſome future period I might be permitted to call it love!"

Emily's emotion would not ſuffer her to reply; and Valancourt, who now ventured to look up, obſerving her countenance change, expected to ſee her faint, and made an involuntary effort to ſupport her, which recalled Emily to a ſenſe of her ſituation, and to an exertion of her ſpirits. Valancourt did not appear to notice her indiſpoſition, but, when he ſpoke again, his voice told the tendereſt love. "I will not preſume,"

ſume," he added, " to intrude this ſubject longer upon your attention at this time, but I may, perhaps, be permitted to mention, that theſe parting moments would loſe much of their bitterneſs if I might be allowed to hope the declaration I have made would not exclude me from your preſence in future."

Emily made another effort to overcome the confuſion of her thoughts, and to ſpeak. She feared to truſt the preference her heart acknowledged towards Valancourt, and to give him any encouragement for hope, on ſo ſhort an acquaintance. For though in this narrow period ſhe had obſerved much that was admirable in his taſte and diſpoſition, and though theſe obſervations had been ſanctioned by the opinion of her father, they were not ſufficient teſtimonies of his general worth to determine her upon a ſubject ſo infinitely important to her future happineſs as that, which now ſolicited her attention. Yet, though the thought of diſmiſſing Valancourt was ſo very painful to her, that ſhe could ſcarcely endure to pauſe upon it,

the

the conſciouſneſs of this made her fear the partiality of her judgment, and heſitate ſtill more to encourage that ſuit, for which her own heart too tenderly pleaded. The family of Valancourt, if not his circumſtances, had been known to her father, and known to be unexceptionable. Of his circumſtances, Valancourt himſelf hinted as far as delicacy would permit, when he ſaid he had at preſent little elſe to offer but an heart, that adored her. He had ſolicited only for a diſtant hope, and ſhe could not reſolve to forbid, though ſhe ſcarcely dared to permit it; at length, ſhe acquired courage to ſay, that ſhe muſt think herſelf honoured by the good opinion of any perſon, whom her father had eſteemed.

"And was I, then, thought worthy of his eſteem?" ſaid Valancourt, in a voice trembling with anxiety; then checking himſelf, he added, "But pardon the queſtion; I ſcarcely know what I ſay. If I might dare to hope, that you think me not unworthy ſuch honour, and might be permitted ſometimes

to

to enquire after your health, I ſhould now leave you with comparative tranquillity."

Emily, after a moment's ſilence, ſaid, "I will be ingenuous with you, for I know you will underſtand, and allow for my ſituation; you will conſider it as a proof of my—my eſteem that I am ſo. Though I live here in what was my father's houſe, I live here alone. I have, alas! no longer a parent—a parent, whoſe preſence might ſanction your viſits. It is unneceſſary for me to point out the impropriety of my receiving them."

"Nor will I affect to be inſenſible of this," replied Valancourt, adding mournfully—"but what is to conſole me for my candour? I diſtreſs you, and would now leave the ſubject, if I might carry with me a hope of being ſome time permitted to renew it, of being allowed to make myſelf known to your family."

Emily was again confuſed, and again heſitated what to reply; ſhe felt moſt acutely the difficulty—the forlornneſs of her ſitu-

ation, which did not allow her a ſingle relative, or friend, to whom ſhe could turn for even a look, that might ſupport and guide her in the preſent embarraſſing circumſtances. Madame Cheron, who was her only relative, and ought to have been this friend, was either occupied by her own amuſements, or ſo reſentful of the reluctance her niece had ſhewn to quit La Vallée, that ſhe ſeemed totally to have abandoned her.

"Ah! I ſee," ſaid Valancourt, after a long pauſe, during which Emily had begun, and left unfiniſhed two or three ſentences, "I ſee that I have nothing to hope; my fears were too juſt, you think me unworthy of your eſteem. That fatal journey! which I conſidered as the happieſt period of my life —thoſe delightful days were to embitter all my future ones. How often I have looked back to them with hope and fear—yet never till this moment could I prevail with myſelf to regret their enchanting influence."

His voice faltered, and he abruptly quitted his ſeat and walked on the terrace.

There

There was an expreſſion of deſpair on his countenance, that affected Emily. The pleadings of her heart overcame, in ſome degree, her extreme timidity, and, when he reſumed his ſeat, ſhe ſaid, in an accent that betrayed her tenderneſs, " You do both yourſelf and me injuſtice when you ſay I think you unworthy of my eſteem; I will acknowledge that you have long poſſeſſed it, and—and—"

Valancourt waited impatiently for the concluſion of the ſentence, but the words died on her lips. Her eyes, however, reflected all the emotions of her heart. Valancourt paſſed, in an inſtant, from the impatience of deſpair, to that of joy and tenderneſs. " O Emily!" he exclaimed, " my own Emily—teach me to ſuſtain this moment! Let me ſeal it as the moſt ſacred of my life!"

He preſſed her hand to his lips, it was cold and trembling; and, raiſing his eyes, he ſaw the paleneſs of her countenance. Tears came to her relief, and Valancourt watched in anxious ſilence over her. In a

few

few moments, ſhe recovered herſelf, and, ſmiling faintly through her tears, ſaid," "Can you excuſe this weakneſs? My ſpirits have not yet, I believe, recovered from the ſhock they lately received."

"I cannot excuſe myſelf," ſaid Valancourt, "but I will forbear to renew the ſubject, which may have contributed to agitate them, now that I can leave you with the ſweet certainty of poſſeſſing your eſteem."

Then, forgetting his reſolution, he again ſpoke of himſelf. "You know not," ſaid he, "the many anxious hours I have paſſed near you lately, when you believed me, if indeed you honoured me with a thought, far away. I have wandered, near the chateau, in the ſtill hours of the night, when no eye could obſerve me. It was delightful to know I was ſo near you, and there was ſomething particularly ſoothing in the thought, that I watched round your habitation, while you ſlept. Theſe grounds are not entirely new to me. Once I ventured within the fence,

and ſpent one of the happieſt, and yet moſt melancholy hours of my life in walking under what I believed to be your window."

Emily enquired how long Valancourt had been in the neighbourhood. "Several days," he replied. "It was my deſign to avail myſelf of the permiſſion M. St. Aubert had given me. I ſcarcely know how to account for it; but, though I anxiouſly wiſhed to do this, my reſolution always failed, when the moment approached, and I conſtantly deferred my viſit. I lodged in a village at ſome diſtance, and wandered with my dogs, among the ſcenes of this charming country, wiſhing continually to meet you, yet not daring to viſit you."

Having thus continued to converſe, without perceiving the flight of time, Valancourt, at length, ſeemed to recollect himſelf. "I muſt go," ſaid he mournfully, but it is with the hope of ſeeing you again, of being permitted to pay my reſpects to your family; let me hear this hope confirmed by your voice." "My family will be happy to ſee

any

any friend of my dear father," ſaid Emily. Valancourt kiſſed her hand, and ſtill lingered, unable to depart, while Emily ſat ſilently with her eyes bent on the ground; and Valancourt, as he gazed on her, conſidered that it would ſoon be impoſſible for him to recall, even to his memory, the exact reſemblance of the beautiful countenance he then beheld; at this moment an haſty footſtep approached from behind the plane tree, and, turning her eyes, Emily ſaw Madame Cheron. She felt a bluſh ſteal upon her cheek, and her frame trembled with the emotion of her mind; but ſhe inſtantly roſe to meet her viſitor. "So, niece!" ſaid Madame Cheron, caſting a look of ſurpriſe and enquiry on Valancourt, "ſo, niece! how do you do? But I need not aſk, your looks tell me you have already recovered your loſs."

"My looks do me injuſtice then, Madam, my loſs I know can never be recovered."

"Well—well! I will not argue with you; I ſee you have exactly your father's

diſpoſition; and let me tell you, it would have been much happier for him, poor man! if it had been a different one."

A look of dignified diſpleaſure, with which Emily regarded Madame Cheron, while ſhe ſpoke, would have touched almoſt any other heart: ſhe made no other reply, but introduced Valancourt, who could ſcarcely ſtifle the reſentment he felt, and whoſe bow Madame Cheron returned with a ſlight curteſy, and a look of ſupercilious examination. After a few moments he took leave of Emily, in a manner, that haſtily expreſſed his pain both at his own departure, and at leaving her to the ſociety of Madame Cheron.

"Who is that young man?" ſaid her aunt, in an accent, which equally implied inquiſitiveneſs and cenſure. "Some idle admirer of yours, I ſuppoſe; but I believed, niece, you had a greater ſenſe of propriety, than to have received the viſits of any young man in your preſent unfriended ſituation. Let me tell you the world will obſerve thoſe things,

things, and it will talk, aye and very freely too."

Emily, extremely ſhocked at this coarſe ſpeech, attempted to interrupt it; but Madame Cheron would proceed, with all the ſelf-importance of a perſon, to whom power is new.

"It is very neceſſary you ſhould be under the eye of ſome perſon more able to guide you than yourſelf. I, indeed, have not much leiſure for ſuch a taſk; however, ſince your poor father made it his laſt requeſt, that I ſhould overlook your conduct —I muſt even take you under my care. But this let me tell you, niece, that, unleſs you will determine to be very conformable to my direction, I ſhall not trouble myſelf longer about you."

Emily made no attempt to interrupt Madame Cheron a ſecond time, grief and the pride of conſcious innocence kept her ſilent, till her aunt ſaid, "I am now come to take you with me to Tholouſe; I am ſorry to find, that your poor father died, after all,

in ſuch indifferent circumſtances; however, I ſhall take you home with me. Ah! poor man, he was always more generous than provident, or he would not have left his daughter dependent on his relations."

"Nor has he done ſo, I hope, madam," ſaid Emily calmly, "nor did his pecuniary misfortunes ariſe from that noble generoſity, which always diſtinguiſhed him. The affairs of M. de Motteville may, I truſt, yet be ſettled without deeply injuring his creditors, and in the mean time I ſhould be very happy to remain at La Vallée."

"No doubt you would," replied Madame Cheron, with a ſmile of irony, "and I ſhall no doubt conſent to this, ſince I ſee how neceſſary tranquillity and retirement are to reſtore your ſpirits. I did not think you capable of ſo much duplicity, niece; when you pleaded this excuſe for remaining here, I fooliſhly believed it to be a juſt one, nor expected to have found with you ſo agreeable a companion as this M. La Val——, I forget his name."

Emily

Emily could no longer endure theſe cruel indignities. "It was a juſt one, madam," ſaid ſhe; "and now, indeed, I feel more than ever the value of the retirement I then ſolicited; and, if the purport of your viſit is only to add inſult to the ſorrows of your brother's child, ſhe could well have ſpared it."

"I ſee that I have undertaken a very troubleſome taſk," ſaid Madame Cheron, colouring highly. "I am ſure, madam," ſaid Emily mildly, and endeavouring to reſtrain her tears, "I am ſure my father did not mean it ſhould be ſuch. I have the happineſs to reflect, that my conduct under his eye was ſuch as he often delighted to approve. It would be very painful to me to diſobey the ſiſter of ſuch a parent, and, if you believe the taſk will really be ſo troubleſome, I muſt lament, that it is yours."

"Well! niece, fine ſpeaking ſignifies little. I am willing, in conſideration of my poor brother, to overlook the impropriety of your

late conduct, and to try what your future will be."

Emily interrupted her, to beg she would explain what was the impropriety she alluded to.

"What impropriety! why that of receiving the visits of a lover unknown to your family," replied Madame Cheron, not considering the impropriety of which she had herself been guilty, in exposing her niece to the possibility of conduct so erroneous.

A faint blush passed over Emily's countenance; pride and anxiety struggled in her breast; and, till she recollected, that appearances did, in some degree, justify her aunt's suspicions, she could not resolve to humble herself so far as to enter into the defence of a conduct, which had been so innocent and undesigning on her part. She mentioned the manner of Valancourt's introduction to her father; the circumstance of his receiving the pistol shot, and of their afterwards travelling together; with the accidental way, in which she had met him, on

the

the preceding evening. She owned he had declared a partiality for her, and that he had aſked permiſſion to addreſs her family.

"And who is this young adventurer, pray?" ſaid Madame Cheron, "and what are his pretenſions?" "Theſe he muſt himſelf explain, madam," replied Emily. "Of his family my father was not ignorant, and I believe it is unexceptionable." She then proceeded to mention what ſhe knew concerning it.

"O, then, this it ſeems is a younger brother," exclaimed her aunt, "and of courſe a beggar. A very fine tale indeed! And ſo my brother took a fancy to this young man after only a few days acquaintance! —but that was ſo like him! In his youth he was always taking theſe likes and diſlikes, when no other perſon ſaw any reaſon for them at all; nay, indeed, I have often thought the people he diſapproved were much more agreeable than thoſe he admired;—but there is no accounting for taſtes. He was always ſo much influenced

by people's countenances; now I, for my part, have no notion of this, it is all ridiculous enthuſiaſm. What has a man's face to do with his character? Can a man of good character help having a diſagreeable face?" —which laſt ſentence Madame Cheron delivered with the deciſive air of a perſon who congratulates herſelf on having made a grand diſcovery, and believes the queſtion to be unanſwerably ſettled.

Emily, deſirous of concluding the converſation, enquired if her aunt would accept ſome refreſhment, and Madame Cheron accompanied her to the chateau, but without deſiſting from a topic, which ſhe diſcuſſed with ſo much complacency to herſelf, and ſeverity to her niece.

"I am ſorry to perceive, niece," ſaid ſhe, in alluſion to ſomewhat that Emily had ſaid, concerning phyſiognomy, "that you have a great many of your father's prejudices, and among them are thoſe ſudden predilections for people from their looks. I can perceive, that you imagine yourſelf to be violently

violently in love with this young adventurer, after an acquaintance of only a few days. There was ſomething, too, ſo charmingly romantic in the manner of your meeting!"

Emily checked the tears, that trembled in her eyes, while ſhe ſaid, "When my conduct ſhall deſerve this ſeverity, madam, you will do well to exerciſe it; till then juſtice, if not tenderneſs, ſhould ſurely reſtrain it. I have never willingly offended you; now I have loſt my parents, you are the only perſon to whom I can look for kindneſs. Let me not lament more than ever the loſs of ſuch parents." The laſt words were almoſt ſtifled by her emotions, and ſhe burſt into tears. Remembering the delicacy and the tenderneſs of St. Aubert, the happy, happy days ſhe had paſſed in theſe ſcenes, and contraſting them with the coarſe and unfeeling behaviour of Madame Cheron, and with the future hours of mortification ſhe muſt ſubmit to in her preſence—a degree of grief ſeized her, that almoſt reached deſpair. Madame Cheron, more offended by the re-

proof, which Emily's words conveyed, than touched by the ſorrow they expreſſed, ſaid nothing, that might ſoften her grief; but, notwithſtanding an apparent reluctance to receive her niece, ſhe deſired her company. The love of ſway was her ruling paſſion, and ſhe knew it would be highly gratified by taking into her houſe a young orphan, who had no appeal from her deciſions, and on whom ſhe could exerciſe without controul the capricious humour of the moment.

On entering the chateau, Madame Cheron expreſſed a deſire, that ſhe would put up what ſhe thought neceſſary to take to Tholouſe, as ſhe meant to ſet off immediately. Emily now tried to perſuade her to defer the journey, at leaſt, till the next day, and, at length, with much difficulty, prevailed.

The day paſſed in the exerciſe of petty tyranny on the part of Madame Cheron, and in mournful regret and melancholy anticipation on that of Emily, who, when her aunt retired to her apartment for the night, went to take leave of every other

room

room in this her dear native home, which ſhe was now quitting for ſhe knew not how long, and for a world, to which ſhe was wholly a ſtranger. She could not conquer a preſentiment, which frequently occurred to her, this night—that ſhe ſhould never more return to La Vallée. Having paſſed a conſiderable time in what had been her father's ſtudy, having ſelected ſome of his favourite authors, to put up with her clothes, and ſhed many tears, as ſhe wiped the duſt from their covers, ſhe ſeated herſelf in his chair before the reading deſk, and ſat loſt in melancholy reflection, till Thereſa opened the door to examine, as was her cuſtom before ſhe went to bed, if all was ſafe. She ſtarted, on obſerving her young lady, who bade her come in, and then gave her ſome directions for keeping the chateau in readineſs for her reception at all times.

"Alas-a-day! that you ſhould leave it!" ſaid Thereſa, "I think you would be happier here than where you are going, if one may judge." Emily made no reply to this remark;

remark; the ſorrow Thereſa proceeded to expreſs at her departure affected her, but ſhe found ſome comfort in the ſimple affection of this poor old ſervant, to whom ſhe gave ſuch directions as might beſt conduce to her comfort, during her own abſence.

Having diſmiſſed Thereſa to bed, Emily wandered through every lonely apartment of the chateau, lingering long in what had been her father's bed-room, indulging melancholy, yet not unpleaſing, emotions, and, having often returned within the door to take another look at it, ſhe withdrew to her own chamber. From her window ſhe gazed upon the garden below, ſhewn faintly by the moon, riſing over the tops of the palm-trees, and, at length, the calm beauty of the night increaſed a deſire of indulging the mournful ſweetneſs of bidding farewell to the beloved ſhades of her childhood, till ſhe was tempted to deſcend. Throwing over her the light veil, in which ſhe uſually walked, ſhe ſilently paſſed into the garden, and, haſtening towards the diſtant groves, was glad to breathe once

once more the air of liberty, and to ſigh unobſerved. The deep repoſe of the ſcene, the rich ſcents, that floated on the breeze, the grandeur of the wide horizon and of the clear blue arch, ſoothed and gradually elevated her mind to that ſublime complacency, which renders the vexations of this world ſo inſignificant and mean in our eyes, that we wonder they have had power for a moment to diſturb us. Emily forgot Madame Cheron and all the circumſtances of her conduct, while her thoughts aſcended to the contemplation of thoſe unnumbered worlds, that lie ſcattered in the depths of æther, thouſands of them hid from human eyes, and almoſt beyond the flight of human fancy. As her imagination ſoared through the regions of ſpace, and aſpired to that Great Firſt Cauſe, which pervades and governs all being, the idea of her father ſcarcely ever left her; but it was a pleaſing idea, ſince ſhe reſigned him to God in the full confidence of a pure and holy faith. She purſued her way through the groves to the terrace,

terrace, often pauſing as memory awakened the pang of affection, and as reaſon anticipated the exile, into which ſhe was going.

And now the moon was high over the woods, touching their ſummits with yellow light, and darting between the foliage long level beams; while on the rapid Garonne below the trembling radiance was faintly obſcured by the lighteſt vapour. Emily long watched the playing luſtre, liſtened to the ſoothing murmur of the current, and the yet lighter ſounds of the air, as it ſtirred, at intervals, the lofty palm-trees. "How delightful is the ſweet breath of theſe groves!" ſaid ſhe. "This lovely ſcene!—how often ſhall I remember and regret it, when I am far away! Alas! what events may occur before I ſee it again! O, peaceful, happy ſhades!—ſcenes of my infant delights, of parental tenderneſs now loſt for ever!—why muſt I leave ye!—In your retreats I ſhould ſtill find ſafety and repoſe. Sweet hours of my childhood—I am now to leave even your laſt memorials! No ob-

jects, that would revive your impreſſions, will remain for me!"

Then drying her tears and looking up, her thoughts roſe again to the ſublime ſubject ſhe had contemplated; the ſame divine complacency ſtole over her heart, and, huſhing its throbs, inſpired hope and confidence and reſignation to the will of the Deity, whoſe works filled her mind with adoration.

Emily gazed long on the plane-tree, and then ſeated herſelf, for the laſt time, on the bench under its ſhade, where ſhe had ſo often ſat with her parents, and where, only a few hours before, ſhe had converſed with Valancourt, at the remembrance of whom, thus revived, a mingled ſenſation of eſteem, tenderneſs and anxiety roſe in her breaſt. With this remembrance occurred a recollection of his late confeſſion—that he had often wandered near her habitation in the night, having even paſſed the boundary of the garden, and it immediately occurred to her, that he might be at this moment in the

grounds.

grounds. The fear of meeting him, particularly after the declaration he had made, and of incurring a cenſure, which her aunt might ſo reaſonably beſtow, if it was known, that ſhe was met by her lover, at this hour, made her inſtantly leave her beloved plane-tree, and walk towards the chateau. She caſt an anxious eye around, and often ſtopped for a moment to examine the ſhadowy ſcene before ſhe ventured to proceed; but ſhe paſſed on without perceiving any perſon, till, having reached a clump of almond trees, not far from the houſe, ſhe reſted to take a retroſpect of the garden, and to ſigh forth another adieu. As her eyes wandered over the landſcape ſhe thought ſhe perceived a perſon emerge from the groves, and paſs ſlowly along a moon-light alley that led between them; but the diſtance, and the imperfect light would not ſuffer her to judge with any degree of certainty whether this was fancy or reality. She continued to gaze for ſome time on the ſpot, till on the dead ſtillneſs of the air ſhe heard

heard a ſudden ſound, and in the next inſtant fancied ſhe diſtinguiſhed footſteps near her. Waſting not another moment in conjecture, ſhe hurried to the chateau, and, having reached it, retired to her chamber, where, as ſhe cloſed her window ſhe looked upon the garden, and then again thought ſhe diſtinguiſhed a figure, gliding between the almond trees ſhe had juſt left. She immediately withdrew from the caſement, and, though much agitated, ſought in ſleep the refreſhment of a ſhort oblivion.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

. . . . " I leave that flowery path for aye
Of childhood, where I ſported many a day,
Warbling and ſauntering careleſsly along;
Where every face was innocent and gay,
Each vale romantic, tuneful every tongue,
Sweet, wild, and artleſs all. "

THE MINSTREL.

AT an early hour, the carriage, which was to take Emily and Madame Cheron to Tholouſe, appeared at the door of the chateau, and Madame was already in the breakfaſt-room, when her niece entered it. The repaſt was ſilent and melancholy on the part of Emily; and Madame Cheron, whoſe vanity was piqued on obſerving her dejection, reproved her in a manner that did not contribute to remove it. It was with much reluctance, that Emily's requeſt to take with her the dog, which had been a favourite

favourite of her father, was granted. Her aunt, impatient to be gone, ordered the carriage to draw up; and, while ſhe paſſed to the hall door, Emily gave another look into the library, and another farewell glance over the garden, and then followed. Old Thereſa ſtood at the door to take leave of her young lady. "God for ever keep you, ma'amſelle!" ſaid ſhe, while Emily gave her hand in ſilence, and could anſwer only with a preſſure of her hand, and a forced ſmile.

At the gate, which led out of the grounds, ſeveral of her father's penſioners were aſſembled to bid her farewell, to whom ſhe would have ſpoken, if her aunt would have ſuffered the driver to ſtop; and, having diſtributed to them almoſt all the money ſhe had about her, ſhe ſunk back in the carriage, yielding to the melancholy of her heart. Soon after, ſhe caught, between the ſteep banks of the road, another view of the chateau, peeping from among the high trees, and ſurrounded by green ſlopes and

and tufted groves, the Garonne winding its way beneath their ſhades, ſometimes loſt among the vineyards, and then riſing in greater majeſty in the diſtant paſtures. The towering precipices of the Pyrenées, that roſe to the ſouth, gave Emily a thouſand intereſting recollections of her late journey; and theſe objects of her former enthuſiaſtic admiration, now excited only ſorrow and regret. Having gazed on the chateau and its lovely ſcenery, till the banks again cloſed upon them, her mind became too much occupied by mournful reflections, to permit her to attend to the converſation, which Madame Cheron had begun on ſome trivial topic, ſo that they ſoon travelled in profound ſilence.

Valancourt, mean while, was returned to Eſtuviere, his heart occupied with the image of Emily; ſometimes indulging in reveries of future happineſs, but more frequently ſhrinking with dread of the oppoſition he might encounter from her family. He was the younger ſon of an ancient family of Gaſcony;

Gaſcony; and, having loſt his parents at an early period of his life, the care of his education and of his ſmall portion had devolved to his brother, the Count de Duvarney, his ſenior by nearly twenty years. Valancourt had been educated in all the accompliſhments of his age, and had an ardour of ſpirit, and a certain grandeur of mind, that gave him particular excellence in the exerciſes then thought heroic. His little fortune had been diminiſhed by the neceſſary expences of his education; but M. La Valancourt, the elder, ſeemed to think, that his genius and accompliſhments would amply ſupply the deficiency of his inheritance. They offered flattering hopes of promotion in the military profeſſion, in thoſe times almoſt the only one in which a gentleman could engage without incurring a ſtain on his name; and La Valancourt was of courſe enrolled in the army. The general genius of his mind was but little underſtood by his brother. That ardour for whatever is great and good in the moral world, as well

as

as in the natural one, diſplayed itſelf in his infant years; and the ſtrong indignation, which he felt and expreſſed at a criminal, or a mean action, ſometimes drew upon him the diſpleaſure of his tutor; who reprobated it under the general term of violence of temper; and who, when haranguing on the virtues of mildneſs and moderation, ſeemed to forget the gentleneſs and compaſſion, which always appeared in his pupil towards objects of misfortune.

He had now obtained leave of abſence from his regiment when he made the excurſion into the Pyrenées, which was the means of introducing him to St. Aubert; and, as this permiſſion was nearly expired, he was the more anxious to declare himſelf to Emily's family, from whom he reaſonably apprehended oppoſition, ſince his fortune, though, with a moderate addition from hers, it would be ſufficient to ſupport them, would not ſatisfy the views, either of vanity, or ambition. Valancourt was not without the latter, but he ſaw golden viſions of pro-

motion

motion in the army; and believed, that with Emily he could, in the mean time, be delighted to live within the limits of his humble income. His thoughts were now occupied in conſidering the means of making himſelf known to her family, to whom, however, he had yet no addreſs, for he was entirely ignorant of Emily's precipitate departure from La Vallée, of whom he hoped to obtain it.

Meanwhile, the travellers purſued their journey; Emily making frequent efforts to appear cheerful, and too often relapſing into ſilence and dejection. Madame Cheron, attributing her melancholy ſolely to the circumſtance of her being removed to a diſtance from her lover, and believing, that the ſorrow, which her niece ſtill expreſſed for the loſs of St. Aubert, proceeded partly from an affectation of ſenſibility, endeavoured to make it appear ridiculous to her, that ſuch deep regret ſhould continue to be felt ſo long after the period uſually allowed for grief.

At length, these unpleasant lectures were interrupted by the arrival of the travellers at Tholouse; and Emily, who had not been there for many years, and had only a very faint recollection of it, was surprised at the ostentatious style exhibited in her aunt's house and furniture; the more so, perhaps, because it was so totally different from the modest elegance, to which she had been accustomed. She followed Madame Cheron through a large hall, where several servants in rich liveries appeared, to a kind of saloon, fitted up with more shew than taste; and her aunt, complaining of fatigue, ordered supper immediately. "I am glad to find myself in my own house again," said she, throwing herself on a large settee, "and to have my own people about me. I detest travelling; though, indeed, I ought to like it, for what I see abroad always makes me delighted to return to my own chateau. What makes you so silent, child?—What is it that disturbs you now?"

Emily suppressed a starting tear, and tried

tried to ſmile away the expreſſion of an oppreſſed heart; ſhe was thinking of *her* home, and felt too ſenſibly the arrogance and oſtentatious vanity of Madame Cheron's converſation. "Can this be my father's ſiſter!" ſaid ſhe to herſelf; and then the conviction that ſhe was ſo, warming her heart with ſomething like kindneſs towards her, ſhe felt anxious to ſoften the harſh impreſſion her mind had received of her aunt's character, and to ſhew a willingneſs to oblige her. The effort did not entirely fail; ſhe liſtened with apparent cheerfulneſs, while Madame Cheron expatiated on the ſplendour of her houſe, told of the numerous parties ſhe entertained, and what ſhe ſhould expect of Emily, whoſe diffidence aſſumed the air of a reſerve, which her aunt, believing it to be that of pride and ignorance united, now took occaſion to reprehend. She knew nothing of the conduct of a mind, that fears to truſt its own powers; which, poſſeſſing a nice judgment, and inclining to believe that every other perſon perceives

ſtill more critically, fears to commit itſelf to cenſure, and ſeeks ſhelter in the obſcurity of ſilence. Emily had frequently bluſhed at the fearleſs manners, which ſhe had ſeen admired, and the brilliant nothings, which ſhe had heard applauded; yet this applauſe, ſo far from encouraging her to imitate the conduct that had won it, rather made her ſhrink into the reſerve, that would protect her from ſuch abſurdity.

Madame Cheron looked on her niece's diffidence with a feeling very near to contempt, and endeavoured to overcome it by reproof, rather than to encourage it by gentleneſs.

The entrance of ſupper ſomewhat interrupted the complacent diſcourſe of Madame Cheron, and the painful conſiderations which it had forced upon Emily. When the repaſt, which was rendered oſtentatious by the attendance of a great number of ſervants, and by a profuſion of plate, was over, Madame Cheron retired to her chamber, and a female ſervant came to ſhew Emily

to

to hers. Having paſſed up a large ſtaircaſe, and through ſeveral galleries, they came to a flight of back ſtairs, which led into a ſhort paſſage in a remote part of the chateau, and there the ſervant opened the door of a ſmall chamber, which ſhe ſaid was ma'amſelle Emily's, who, once more alone, indulged the tears ſhe had long tried to reſtrain.

Thoſe, who know, from experience, how much the heart becomes attached even to inanimate objects, to which it has been long accuſtomed, how unwillingly it reſigns them; how with the ſenſations of an old friend it meets them, after temporary abſence, will underſtand the forlornneſs of Emily's feelings, of Emily ſhut out from the only home ſhe had known from her infancy, and thrown upon a ſcene, and among perſons, diſagreeable for more qualities than their novelty. Her father's favourite dog, now in the chamber, thus ſeemed to acquire the character and importance of a friend; and, as the animal fawned over her

when ſhe wept, and licked her hands, "Ah, poor Manchon!" ſaid ſhe, "I have nobody now to love me—but you!" and ſhe wept the more. After ſome time, her thoughts returning to her father's injunctions, ſhe remembered how often he had blamed her for indulging uſeleſs ſorrow; how often he had pointed out to her the neceſſity of fortitude and patience, aſſuring her, that the faculties of the mind ſtrengthen by exertion, till they finally unnerve affliction, and triumph over it. Theſe recollections dried her tears, gradually ſoothed her ſpirits, and inſpired her with the ſweet emulation of practiſing precepts which her father had ſo frequently inculcated.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Some pow'r impart the ſpear and ſhield,
At which the wizard paſſions fly,
By which the giant follies die.

COLLINS.

MADAME Cheron's houſe ſtood at a little diſtance from the city of Tholouſe, and was ſurrounded by extenſive gardens, in which Emily, who had ariſen early, amuſed herſelf with wandering before breakfaſt. From a terrace, that extended along the higheſt part of them, was a wide view over Languedoc. On the diſtant horizon to the ſouth, ſhe diſcovered the wild ſummits of the Pyrenées, and her fancy immediately painted the green paſtures of Gaſcony at their feet. Her heart pointed to her peaceful home—to the neighbourhood where Valancourt was—where St.

Aubert had been; and her imagination, piercing the veil of diſtance, brought that home to her eyes in all its intereſting and romantic beauty. She experienced an inexpreſſible pleaſure in believing, that ſhe beheld the country around it, though no feature could be diſtinguiſhed, except the retiring chain of the Pyrenées; and, inattentive to the ſcene immediately before her, and to the flight of time, ſhe continued to lean on the window of a pavilion, that terminated the terrace, with her eyes fixed on Gaſcony, and her mind occupied with the intereſting ideas which the view of it awakened, till a ſervant came to tell her breakfaſt was ready. Her thoughts thus recalled to the ſurrounding objects, the ſtraight walks, ſquare parterres, and artificial fountains of the garden, could not fail, as ſhe paſſed through it, to appear the worſe, oppoſed to the negligent graces, and natural beauties of the grounds at La Vallée, upon which her recollection had been ſo intenſely employed.

"Whither

" Whither have you been rambling ſo early?" ſaid Madame Cheron, as her niece entered the breakfaſt-room. " I don't approve of theſe ſolitary walks;" and Emily was ſurpriſed, when, having informed her aunt, that ſhe had been no further than the gardens, ſhe underſtood theſe to be included in the reproof. " I deſire you will not walk there again at ſo early an hour unattended," ſaid Madame Cheron; " my gardens are very extenſive; and a young woman, who can make aſſignations by moonlight, at La Vallée, is not to be truſted to her own inclinations elſewhere."

Emily, extremely ſurpriſed and ſhocked, had ſcarcely power to beg an explanation of theſe words, and, when ſhe did, her aunt abſolutely refuſed to give it, though, by her ſevere looks, and half ſentences, ſhe appeared anxious to impreſs Emily with a belief, that ſhe was well informed of ſome degrading circumſtances of her conduct. Conſcious innocence could not prevent a bluſh from ſtealing over Emily's cheek; ſhe trem-

bled, and looked confuſedly under the bold eye of Madame Cheron, who bluſhed alſo; but hers was the bluſh of triumph, ſuch as ſometimes ſtains the countenance of a perſon, congratulating himſelf on the penetration which had taught him to ſuſpect another, and who loſes both pity for the ſuppoſed criminal, and indignation of his guilt, in the gratification of his own vanity.

Emily, not doubting that her aunt's miſtake aroſe from the having obſerved her ramble in the garden on the night preceding her departure from La Vallée, now mentioned the motive of it, at which Madame Cheron ſmiled contemptuouſly, refuſing either to accept this explanation, or to give her reaſons for refuſing it; and, ſoon after, ſhe concluded the ſubject by ſaying, "I never truſt people's affections, I always judge of them by their actions; but I am willing to try what will be your behaviour in future."

Emily, leſs ſurpriſed by her aunt's moderation and myſterious ſilence, than by the accuſation

accuſation ſhe had received, deeply conſidered the latter, and ſcarcely doubted, that it was Valancourt whom ſhe had ſeen at night in the gardens of La Vallée, and that he had been obſerved there by Madame Cheron; who now paſſing from one painful topic only to revive another almoſt equally ſo, ſpoke of the ſituation of her niece's property, in the hands of M. Motteville. While ſhe thus talked with oſtentatious pity of Emily's misfortunes, ſhe failed not to inculcate the duties of humility and gratitude, or to render Emily fully ſenſible of every cruel mortification, who ſoon perceived, that ſhe was to be conſidered as a dependent, not only by her aunt, but by her aunt's ſervants.

She was now informed, that a large party were expected to dinner, on which account Madame Cheron repeated the leſſon of the preceding night, concerning her conduct in company, and Emily wiſhed, that ſhe might have courage enough to practiſe it. Her aunt then proceeded to examine the ſimplicity of her dreſs, adding, that ſhe expected

to ſee her attired with gaiety and taſte; after which ſhe condeſcended to ſhew Emily the ſplendour of her chateau, and to point out the particular beauty, or elegance, which ſhe thought diſtinguiſhed each of her numerous ſuites of apartments. She then withdrew to her toilet, the throne of her homage, and Emily to her chamber, to unpack her books, and to try to charm her mind by reading, till the hour of dreſſing.

When the company arrived, Emily entered the ſaloon with an air of timidity, which all her efforts could not overcome, and which was increaſed by the conſciouſneſs of Madame Cheron's ſevere obſervation. Her mourning dreſs, the mild dejection of her beautiful countenance, and the retiring diffidence of her manner, rendered her a very intereſting object to many of the company; among whom ſhe diſtinguiſhed Signor Montoni, and his friend Cavigni, the late viſitors at M. Queſnel's, who now ſeemed to converſe with Madame Cheron with the familiarity of old acquaintance,

and

and ſhe to attend to them with particular pleaſure.

This Signor Montoni had an air of conſcious ſuperiority, animated by ſpirit, and ſtrengthened by talents, to which every perſon ſeemed involuntarily to yield. The quickneſs of his perceptions was ſtrikingly expreſſed on his countenance, yet that countenance could ſubmit implicitly to occaſion; and, more than once in this day, the triumph of art over nature might have been diſcerned in it. His viſage was long, and rather narrow, yet he was called handſome; and it was, perhaps, the ſpirit and vigour of his ſoul, ſparkling through his features, that triumphed for him. Emily felt admiration, but not the admiration that leads to eſteem; for it was mixed with a degree of fear ſhe knew not exactly wherefore.

Cavigni was gay and inſinuating as formerly; and, though he paid almoſt inceſſant attention to Madame Cheron, he found ſome opportunities of converſing with Emily,

Emily, to whom he directed, at firſt, the ſallies of his wit, but now and then aſſumed an air of tenderneſs, which ſhe obſerved, and ſhrunk from. Though ſhe replied but little, the gentleneſs and ſweetneſs of her manners encouraged him to talk, and ſhe felt relieved when a young lady of the party, who ſpoke inceſſantly, obtruded herſelf on his notice. This lady, who poſſeſſed all the ſprightlineſs of a French woman, with all her coquetry, affected to underſtand every ſubject, or rather there was no affectation in the caſe; for, never looking beyond the limits of her own ignorance, ſhe believed ſhe had nothing to learn. She attracted notice from all; amuſed ſome, diſguſted others for a moment, and was then forgotten.

This day paſſed without any material occurrence; and Emily, though amuſed by the characters ſhe had ſeen, was glad when ſhe could retire to the recollections, which had acquired with her the character of duties.

A fortnight paſſed in a round of diſſipation and company, and Emily, who attended Madame Cheron in all her viſits, was ſometimes entertained, but oftener wearied. She was ſtruck by the apparent talents and knowledge diſplayed in the various converſations ſhe liſtened to, and it was long before ſhe diſcovered, that the talents were for the moſt part thoſe of impoſture, and the knowledge nothing more than was neceſſary to aſſiſt them. But what deceived her moſt, was the air of conſtant gaiety and good ſpirits, diſplayed by every viſitor, and which ſhe ſuppoſed to ariſe from content as conſtant, and from benevolence as ready. At length, from the over-acting of ſome, leſs accompliſhed than the others, ſhe could perceive, that, though contentment and benevolence are the only ſure ſources of cheerfulneſs, the immoderate and feveriſh animation, uſually exhibited in large parties, reſults partly from an inſenſibility to the cares, which benevolence muſt ſometimes derive from the ſufferings of others,

others, and partly from a deſire to diſplay the appearance of that proſperity, which they know will command ſubmiſſion and attention to themſelves.

Emily's pleaſanteſt hours were paſſed in the pavilion of the terrace, to which ſhe retired, when ſhe could ſteal from obſervation, with a book to overcome, or a lute to indulge, her melancholy. There, as ſhe ſat with her eyes fixed on the far diſtant Pyrenées, and her thoughts on Valancourt and the beloved ſcenes of Gaſcony, ſhe would play the ſweet and melancholy ſongs of her native province—the popular ſongs ſhe had liſtened to from her childhood.

One evening, having excuſed herſelf from accompanying her aunt abroad, ſhe thus withdrew to the pavilion, with books and her lute. It was the mild and beautiful evening of a ſultry day, and the windows, which fronted the weſt, opened upon all the glory of a ſetting ſun. Its rays illuminated, with ſtrong ſplendour, the cliffs of the Pyrenées, and touched their ſnowy tops with

with a roſeate hue, that remained, long after the ſun had ſunk below the horizon, and the ſhades of twilight had ſtolen over the landſcape. Emily touched her lute with that fine melancholy expreſſion, which came from her heart. The penſive hour and the ſcene, the evening light on the Garonne, that flowed at no great diſtance, and whoſe waves, as they paſſed towards La Vallée, ſhe often viewed with a ſigh,—theſe united circumſtances diſpoſed her mind to tenderneſs, and her thoughts were with Valancourt; of whom ſhe had heard nothing ſince her arrival at Tholouſe, and now that ſhe was removed from him, and in uncertainty, ſhe perceived all the intereſt he held in her heart. Before ſhe ſaw Valancourt ſhe had never met a mind and taſte ſo accordant with her own, and, though Madame Cheron told her much of the arts of diſſimulation, and that the elegance and propriety of thought, which ſhe ſo much admired in her lover, were aſſumed for the purpoſe of pleaſing her, ſhe could ſcarcely doubt their truth.

truth. This poſſibility, however, faint as it was, was ſufficient to haraſs her mind with anxiety, and ſhe found, that few conditions are more painful than that of uncertainty, as to the merit of a beloved object; an uncertainty, which ſhe would not have ſuffered, had her confidence in her own opinions been greater.

She was awakened from her muſing by the ſound of horſes' feet along a road, that wound under the windows of the pavilion, and a gentleman paſſed on horſeback, whoſe reſemblance to Valancourt, in air and figure, for the twilight did not permit a view of his features, immediately ſtruck her. She retired haſtily from the lattice, fearing to be ſeen, yet wiſhing to obſerve further, while the ſtranger paſſed on without looking up, and, when ſhe returned to the lattice, ſhe ſaw him faintly through the twilight, winding under the high trees, that led to Tholouſe. This little incident ſo much diſturbed her ſpirits, that the temple and its ſcenery were no longer intereſting to her,

and,

and, after walking awhile on the terrace, ſhe returned to the chateau.

Madame Cheron, whether ſhe had ſeen a rival admired, had loſt at play, or had witneſſed an entertainment more ſplendid than her own, was returned from her viſit with a temper more than uſually diſcompoſed; and Emily was glad, when the hour arrived, in which ſhe could retire to the ſolitude of her own apartment.

On the following morning, ſhe was ſummoned to Madame Cheron, whoſe countenance was inflamed with reſentment, and, as Emily advanced, ſhe held out a letter to her.

"Do you know this hand?" ſaid ſhe, in a ſevere tone, and with a look that was intended to ſearch her heart, while Emily examined the letter attentively, and aſſured her, that ſhe did not.

"Do not provoke me," ſaid her aunt; "you do know it, confeſs the truth immediately. I inſiſt upon your confeſſing the truth inſtantly."

Emily

Emily was ſilent, and turned to leave the room, but Madame called her back. "O you are guilty then," ſaid ſhe, "you do know the hand." "If you was before in doubt of this, madam," replied Emily calmly, "why did you accuſe me of having told a falſehood?" Madame Cheron did not bluſh; but her niece did, a moment after, when ſhe heard the name of Valancourt. It was not, however, with the conſciouſneſs of deſerving reproof, for, if ſhe ever had ſeen his hand-writing, the preſent characters did not bring it to her recollection.

"It is uſeleſs to deny it," ſaid Madame Cheron, "I ſee in your countenance, that you are no ſtranger to this letter; and, I dare ſay, you have received many ſuch from this impertinent young man, without my knowledge, in my own houſe."

Emily, ſhocked at the indelicacy of this accuſation, ſtill more than by the vulgarity of the former, inſtantly forgot the pride, that had impoſed ſilence, and endeavoured to vindicate

vindicate herſelf from the aſperſion, but Madame Cheron was not to be convinced.

" I cannot ſuppoſe," ſhe reſumed, " that this young man would have taken the liberty of writing to me, if you had not encouraged him to do ſo, and I muſt now"—" You will allow me to remind you, madam," ſaid Emily timidly, " of ſome particulars of a converſation we had at La Vallée. I then told you truly, that I had only not forbade Monſieur Valancourt from addreſſing my family."

" I will not be interrupted," ſaid Madame Cheron, interrupting her niece, " I was going to ſay—I—I—have forgot what I was going to ſay. But how happened it that you did not forbid him ?" Emily was ſilent. " How happened it that you encouraged him to trouble me with this letter ?—A young man that nobody knows ;—an utter ſtranger in the place,—a young adventurer, no doubt, who is looking out for a good fortune. However, on that point he has miſtaken his aim."

" His

"His family was known to my father," ſaid Emily modeſtly, and without appearing to be ſenſible of the laſt ſentence.

"O! that is no recommendation at all," replied her aunt, [illegible]h her uſual readineſs upon this topic; "he took ſuch ſtrange fancies to people! He was always judging perſons by their countenances, and was continually deceived." "Yet it was but now, madam, that you judged me guilty by my countenance," ſaid Emily, with a deſign of reproving Madame Cheron, to which ſhe was induced by this diſreſpectful mention of her father.

"I called you here," reſumed her aunt, colouring, "to tell you, that I will not be diſturbed in my own houſe by any letters, or viſits from young men, who may take a fancy to flatter you. This M. de Valentine—I think you call him—has the impertinence to beg I will permit him to pay his reſpects to me! I ſhall ſend him a proper anſwer. And for you, Emily, I repeat it once for all—if you are not contented to conform

conform to my directions, and to my way of life, I ſhall give up the taſk of overlooking your conduct—I ſhall no longer trouble myſelf with your education, but ſhall ſend you to board in a convent."

"Dear madam," ſaid Emily, burſting into tears, and overcome by the rude ſuſpicions her aunt had expreſſed, "how have I deſerved theſe reproofs?" She could ſay no more; and ſo very fearful was ſhe of acting with any degree of impropriety in the affair itſelf, that, at the preſent moment, Madame Cheron might perhaps have prevailed with her to bind herſelf by a promiſe to renounce Valancourt for ever. Her mind, weakened by her terrors, would no longer ſuffer her to view him as ſhe had formerly done; ſhe feared the error of her own judgment, not that of Madame Cheron, and feared alſo, that in her former converſation with him, at La Vallée, ſhe had not conducted herſelf with ſufficient reſerve. She knew, that ſhe did not deſerve the coarſe ſuſpicions, which her aunt had thrown out,

but

but a thouſand ſcruples roſe to torment her, ſuch as would never have diſturbed the peace of Madame Cheron. Thus rendered anxious to avoid every opportunity of erring, and willing to ſubmit to any reſtrictions, that her aunt ſhould think proper, ſhe expreſſed an obedience, to which Madame Cheron did not give much confidence, and which ſhe ſeemed to conſider as the conſequence of either fear, or artifice.

"Well then," ſaid ſhe, "promiſe me that you will neither ſee this young man, nor write to him without my conſent."—"Dear madam," replied Emily, "can you ſuppoſe I would do either, unknown to you!" "I don't know what to ſuppoſe; there is no knowing how young women will act. It is difficult to place any confidence in them, for they have ſeldom ſenſe enough to wiſh for the reſpect of the world."

"Alas, madam!" ſaid Emily, "I am anxious for my own reſpect; my father taught me the value of that; he ſaid if I deſerved

ſerved my own eſteem, that of the world would follow of courſe."

"My brother was a good kind of a man," replied Madame Cheron, "but he did not know the world. I am ſure I have always felt a proper reſpect for myſelf, yet——" She ſtopped, but ſhe might have added, that the world had not always ſhewn reſpect to her, and this without impeaching its judgment.

"Well!" reſumed Madame Cheron, "you have not given me the promiſe, though, that I demand." Emily readily gave it, and, being then ſuffered to withdraw, ſhe walked in the garden; tried to compoſe her ſpirits, and, at length, arrived at her favourite pavilion at the end of the terrace, where, ſeating herſelf at one of the embowered windows, that opened upon a balcony, the ſtillneſs and ſecluſion of the ſcene allowed her to recollect her thoughts, and to arrange them ſo as to form a clearer judgment of her former conduct. She endeavoured to review with exactneſs all the

particulars of her converſation with Valancourt at La Valjée, had the ſatisfaction to obſerve nothing, that could alarm her delicate pride, and thus to be confirmed in the ſelf-eſteem, which was ſo neceſſary to her peace. Her mind then became tranquil, and ſhe ſaw Valancourt amiable and intelligent as he had formerly appeared, and Madame Cheron neither the one, or the other. The remembrance of her lover, however, brought with it many very painful emotions, for it by no means reconciled her to the thought of reſigning him; and, Madame Cheron having already ſhewn how highly ſhe diſapproved of the attachment, ſhe foreſaw much ſuffering from the oppoſition of intereſts; yet with all this was mingled a degree of delight, which, in ſpite of reaſon, partook of hope. She determined, however, that no conſideration ſhould induce her to permit a clandeſtine correſpondence, and to obſerve in her converſation with Valancourt, ſhould they ever meet again, the ſame nicety of reſerve, which had hitherto marked her conduct.

conduct. As she repeated the words—"should we ever meet again!" she shrunk as if this was a circumstance, which had never before occurred to her, and tears came to her eyes, which she hastily dried, for she heard footsteps approaching, and then the door of the pavilion open, and, on turning, she saw—Valancourt. An emotion of mingled pleasure, surprise and apprehension pressed so suddenly upon her heart as almost to overcome her spirits; the colour left her cheeks, then returned brighter than before, and she was for a moment unable to speak, or to rise from her chair. His countenance was the mirror, in which she saw her own emotions reflected, and it roused her to self-command. The joy, which had animated his features, when he entered the pavilion, was suddenly repressed, as, approaching, he perceived her agitation, and, in a tremulous voice, enquired after her health. Recovered from her first surprise, she answered him with a tempered smile; but a variety of opposite emotions still assailed her heart, and

ſtruggled to ſubdue the mild dignity of her manner. It was difficult to tell which predominated—the joy of ſeeing Valancourt, or the terror of her aunt's diſpleaſure, when ſhe ſhould hear of this meeting. After ſome ſhort and embarraſſed converſation, ſhe led him into the gardens, and enquired if he had ſeen Madame Cheron." "No," ſaid he, "I have not yet ſeen her, for they told me ſhe was engaged, and as ſoon as I learned that you were in the gardens, I came hither." He pauſed a moment, in great agitation, and then added, "May I venture to tell you the purport of my viſit, without incurring your diſpleaſure, and to hope, that you will not accuſe me of precipitation in now availing myſelf of the permiſſion you once gave me of addreſſing your family?" Emily, who knew not what to reply, was ſpared from further perplexity, and was ſenſible only of fear, when, on raiſing her eyes, ſhe ſaw Madame Cheron turn into the avenue. As the conſciouſneſs of innocence returned, this fear was ſo far diſſipated as

to

to permit her to appear tranquil, and, inſtead of avoiding her aunt, ſhe advanced with Valancourt to meet her. The look of haughty and impatient diſpleaſure, with which Madame Cheron regarded them, made Emily ſhrink, who underſtood from a ſingle glance, that this meeting was believed to have been more than accidental: having mentioned Valancourt's name, ſhe became again too much agitated to remain with them, and returned into the chateau; where ſhe awaited long, in a ſtate of trembling anxiety, the concluſion of the conference. She knew not how to account for Valancourt's viſit to her aunt, before he had received the permiſſion he ſolicited, ſince ſhe was ignorant of a circumſtance, which would have rendered the requeſt uſeleſs, even if Madame Cheron had been inclined to grant it. Valancourt, in the agitation of his ſpirits, had forgotten to date his letter, ſo that it was impoſſible for Madame Cheron to return an anſwer; and, when he recollected this circumſtance, he was, perhaps,

not ſo ſorry for the omiſſion as glad of the excuſe it allowed him for waiting on her before ſhe could ſend a refuſal.

Madame Cheron had a long converſation with Valancourt, and, when ſhe returned to the chateau, her countenance expreſſed ill-humour, but not the degree of ſeverity, which Emily had apprehended. "I have diſmiſſed this young man, at laſt," ſaid ſhe, "and I hope my houſe will never again be diſturbed with ſimilar viſits. He aſſures me, that your interview was not preconcerted."

"Dear madam!" ſaid Emily in extreme emotion, "you ſurely did not aſk him the queſtion!" "Moſt certainly I did; you could not ſuppoſe I ſhould be ſo imprudent as to neglect it."

"Good God!" exclaimed Emily, "what an opinion muſt he form of me, ſince you, madam, could expreſs a ſuſpicion of ſuch ill conduct!"

"It is of very little conſequence what opinion he may form of you," replied her aunt,

aunt, " for I have put an end to the affair; but I believe he will not form a worſe opinion of me for my prudent conduct. I let him ſee, that I was not to be trifled with; and that I had more delicacy, than to permit any clandeſtine correſpondence to be carried on in my houſe."

Emily had frequently heard Madame Cheron uſe the word delicacy, but ſhe was now more than uſually perplexed to underſtand how ſhe meant to apply it in this inſtance, in which her whole conduct appeared to merit the very reverſe of the term.

" It was very inconſiderate of my brother," reſumed Madame Cheron, " to leave the trouble of overlooking your conduct to me; I wiſh you was well ſettled in life. But if I find, that I am to be further troubled with ſuch viſitors as this M. Valancourt, I ſhall place you in a convent at once;—ſo remember the alternative. This young man has the impertinence to own to me,—he owns it! that his fortune is very ſmall, and that he is chiefly dependent on an elder

brother and on the profeſſion he has choſen! He ſhould have concealed theſe circumſtances, at leaſt, if he expected to ſucceed with me. Had he the preſumption to ſuppoſe I would marry my niece to a perſon ſuch as he deſcribes himſelf!"

Emily dried her tears when ſhe heard of the candid confeſſion of Valancourt; and, though the circumſtances it diſcovered were afflicting to her hopes, his artleſs conduct gave her a degree of pleaſure, that overcame every other emotion. But ſhe was compelled, even thus early in life, to obſerve, that good ſenſe and noble integrity are not always ſufficient to cope with folly and narrow cunning; and her heart was pure enough to allow her, even at this trying moment, to look with more pride on the defeat of the former, than with mortification on the conqueſts of the latter.

Madame Cheron purſued her triumph.—"He has alſo thought proper to tell me, that he will receive his diſmiſſion from no perſon but yourſelf; this favour, however,

I have

I have abſolutely refuſed him. He ſhall learn, that it is quite ſufficient, that I diſapprove him. And I take this opportunity of repeating,—that if you concert any means of interview unknown to me, you ſhall leave my houſe immediately."

"How little do you know me, madam, that you ſhould think ſuch an injunction neceſſary!" ſaid Emily, trying to ſuppreſs her emotion, "how little of the dear parents, who educated me!"

Madame Cheron now went to dreſs for an engagement, which ſhe had made for the evening; and Emily, who would gladly have been excuſed from attending her aunt, did not aſk to remain at home leſt her requeſt ſhould be attributed to an improper motive. When ſhe retired to her own room, the little fortitude which had ſupported her in the preſence of her relation, forſook her; ſhe remembered only that Valancourt, whoſe character appeared more amiable from every circumſtance that unfolded it, was baniſhed from her preſence, perhaps, for ever, and

ſhe paſſed the time in weeping, which, according to her aunt's direction, ſhe ought to have employed in dreſſing. This important duty was, however, quickly diſpatched; though, when ſhe joined Madame Cheron at table, her eyes betrayed, that ſhe had been in tears, and drew upon her a ſevere reproof.

Her efforts to appear cheerful did not entirely fail when ſhe joined the company at the houſe of Madame Clairval, an elderly widow lady, who had lately come to reſide at Tholouſe, on an eſtate of her late huſband. She had lived many years at Paris in a ſplendid ſtyle; had naturally a gay temper, and, ſince her reſidence at Tholouſe, had given ſome of the moſt magnificent entertainments that had been ſeen in that neighbourhood.

Theſe excited not only the envy, but the trifling ambition of Madame Cheron, who, ſince ſhe could not rival the ſplendour of her feſtivities, was deſirous of being ranked in the number of her moſt intimate friends. For this purpoſe ſhe paid her the moſt obſequious

ſequious attention, and made a point of being diſengaged, whenever ſhe received an invitation from Madame Clairval, of whom ſhe talked, wherever ſhe went, and derived much ſelf-conſequence from impreſſing a belief on her general acquaintance, that they were on the moſt familiar footing.

The entertainments of this evening conſiſted of a ball and ſupper; it was a fancy ball, and the company danced in groups in the gardens, which were very extenſive. The high and luxuriant trees, under which the groups aſſembled, were illuminated with a profuſion of lamps, diſpoſed with taſte and fancy. The gay and various dreſſes of the company, ſome of whom were ſeated on the turf, converſing at their eaſe, obſerving the cotillons, taking refreſhments, and ſometimes touching ſportively a guitar; the gallant manners of the gentlemen, the exquiſitely capricious air of the ladies; the light fantaſtic ſteps of their dances; the muſicians, with the lute, the hautboy, and the tabor, ſeated at the foot of an elm, and the ſylvan

ſcenery of woods around were circumſtances, that unitedly formed a characteriſtic and ſtriking picture of French feſtivity. Emily ſurveyed the gaiety of the ſcene with a melancholy kind of pleaſure, and her emotion may be imagined when, as ſhe ſtood with her aunt, looking at one of the groups, ſhe perceived Valancourt; ſaw him dancing with a young and beautiful lady, ſaw him converſing with her with a mixture of attention and familiarity, ſuch as ſhe had ſeldom obſerved in his manner. She turned haſtily from the ſcene, and attempted to draw away Madame Cheron, who was converſing with Signor Cavigni, and neither perceived Valancourt, or was willing to be interrupted. A faintneſs ſuddenly came over Emily, and, unable to ſupport herſelf, ſhe ſat down on a turf bank beneath the trees, where ſeveral other perſons were ſeated. One of theſe, obſerving the extreme paleneſs of her countenance, enquired if ſhe was ill, and begged ſhe would allow him to fetch her a glaſs of water, for which

politeneſs

politeneſs ſhe thanked him, but did not accept it. Her apprehenſion leſt Valancourt ſhould obſerve her emotion made her anxious to overcome it, and ſhe ſucceeded ſo far as to re-compoſe her countenance. Madame Cheron was ſtill converſing with Cavigni; and the Count Bauvillers, who had addreſſed Emily, made ſome obſervations upon the ſcene, to which ſhe anſwered almoſt unconſciouſly, for her mind was ſtill occupied with the idea of Valancourt, to whom it was with extreme uneaſineſs that ſhe remained ſo near. Some remarks, however, which the Count made upon the dance obliged her to turn her eyes towards it, and, at that moment, Valancourt's met hers. Her colour faded again, ſhe felt, that ſhe was relapſing into faintneſs, and inſtantly averted her looks, but not before ſhe had obſerved the altered countenance of Valancourt, on perceiving her. She would have left the ſpot immediately, had ſhe not been conſcious, that this conduct would have ſhewn him more obviouſly the intereſt he held

held in her heart; and, having tried to attend to the Count's converſation and to join in it, ſhe, at length, recovered her ſpirits. But, when he made ſome obſervation on Valancourt's partner, the fear of ſhewing, that ſhe was intereſted in the remark, would have betrayed it to him, had not the Count, while he ſpoke, looked towards the perſon of whom he was ſpeaking. "The lady," ſaid he, "dancing with that young chevalier, who appears to be accompliſhed in every thing, but in dancing, is ranked among the beauties of Tholouſe. She is handſome, and her fortune will be very large. I hope ſhe will make a better choice in a partner for life than ſhe has done in a partner for the dance, for I obſerve he has juſt put the ſet into great confuſion; he does nothing but commit blunders. I am ſurpriſed, that, with his air and figure, he has not taken more care to accompliſh himſelf in dancing."

Emily, whoſe heart trembled at every word, that was now uttered, endeavoured to turn

turn the converſation from Valancourt, by enquiring the name of the lady, with whom he danced; but, before the Count could reply, the dance concluded, and Emily, perceiving that Valancourt was coming towards her, roſe and joined Madame Cheron.

"Here is the Chevalier Valancourt, madam," ſaid ſhe in a whiſper, "pray let us go." Her aunt immediately moved on, but not before Valancourt had reached them, who bowed lowly to Madame Cheron, and with an earneſt and dejected look to Emily, with whom, notwithſtanding all her effort, an air of more than common reſerve prevailed. The preſence of Madame Cheron prevented Valancourt from remaining, and he paſſed on with a countenance, whoſe melancholy reproached her for having increaſed it. Emily was called from the muſing fit, into which ſhe had fallen, by the Count Beauvillers, who was known to her aunt.

"I have your pardon to beg, ma'amſelle," ſaid he, "for a rudeneſs, which you will readily believe was quite unintentional. I did

did not know, that the Chevalier was your acquaintance, when I ſo freely criticiſed his dancing." Emily bluſhed and ſmiled, and Madame Cheron ſpared her the difficulty of replying. "If you mean the perſon, who has juſt paſſed us," ſaid ſhe, "I can aſſure you he is no acquaintance of either mine, or ma'amſelle St. Aubert's: I know nothing of him."

"O! that is the Chevalier Valancourt," ſaid Cavigni careleſsly, and looking back. "You know him then?" ſaid Madame Cheron. "I am not acquainted with him," replied Cavigni. "You don't know, then, the reaſon I have to call him impertinent;—he has had the preſumption to admire my niece!"

"If every man deſerves the title of impertinent, who admires ma'amſelle St. Aubert," replied Cavigni, "I fear there are a great many impertinents, and I am willing to acknowledge myſelf one of the number."

"O ſignor!" ſaid Madame Cheron, with an affected ſmile, "I perceive you have learnt

learnt the art of complimenting, ſince you came into France. But it is cruel to compliment children, ſince they miſtake flattery for truth."

Cavigni turned away his face for a moment, and then ſaid with a ſtudied air, "Whom then are we to compliment, madam? for it would be abſurd to compliment a woman of refined underſtanding; *ſhe* is above all praiſe." As he finiſhed the ſentence he gave Emily a ſly look, and the ſmile, that had lurked in his eye, ſtole forth. She perfectly underſtood it, and bluſhed for Madame Cheron, who replied, "You are perfectly right, ſignor, no woman of underſtanding can endure compliment."

"I have heard ſignor Montoni ſay," rejoined Cavigni, "that he never knew but one woman who deſerved it."

"Well!" exclaimed Madame Cheron, with a ſhort laugh, and a ſmile of unutterable complacency, "and who could ſhe be?"

"O!" replied Cavigni, "it is impoſſible to miſtake her, for certainly there is not more

more than one woman in the world, who has both the merit to deſerve compliment and the wit to refuſe it. Moſt women reverſe the caſe entirely." He looked again at Emily, who bluſhed deeper than before for her aunt, and turned from him with diſpleaſure.

"Well, ſignor!" ſaid Madame Cheron, "I proteſt you are a Frenchman; I never heard a foreigner ſay any thing half ſo gallant as that!"

"True, madam," ſaid the Count, who had been ſome time ſilent, and with a low bow, "but the gallantry of the compliment had been utterly loſt, but for the ingenuity that diſcovered the application."

Madame Cheron did not perceive the meaning of this too ſatirical ſentence, and ſhe, therefore, eſcaped the pain, which Emily felt on her account. "O! here comes ſignor Montoni himſelf," ſaid her aunt, "I proteſt I will tell him all the fine things you have been ſaying to me." The ſignor, however, paſſed at this moment into another walk.

walk. "Pray, who is it, that has ſo much engaged your friend this evening?" aſked Madame Cheron, with an air of chagrin, "I have not ſeen him once."

"He had a very particular engagement with the Marquis La Riviére," replied Cavigni, "which has detained him, I perceive, till this moment, or he would have done himſelf the honour of paying his reſpects to you, madam, ſooner, as he commiſſioned me to ſay. But, I know not how it is—your converſation is ſo faſcinating—that it can charm even memory, I think, or I ſhould certainly have delivered my friend's apology before."

"The apology, ſir, would have been more ſatisfactory from himſelf," ſaid Madame Cheron, whoſe vanity was more mortified by Montoni's neglect, than flattered by Cavigni's compliment. Her manner, at this moment, and Cavigni's late converſation, now awakened a ſuſpicion in Emily's mind, which, notwithſtanding that ſome recollections ſerved to confirm it, appeared prepoſterous.

ſterous. She thought ſhe perceived, that Montoni was paying ſerious addreſſes to her aunt, and that ſhe not only accepted them, but was jealouſly watchful of any appearance of neglect on his part.—That Madame Cheron at her years ſhould elect a ſecond huſband was ridiculous, though her vanity made it not impoſſible; but that Montoni, with his diſcernment, his figure, and pretenſions, ſhould make a choice of Madame Cheron—appeared moſt wonderful. Her thoughts, however, did not dwell long on the ſubject; nearer intereſts preſſed upon them; Valancourt, rejected of her aunt, and Valancourt dancing with a gay and beautiful partner, alternately tormented her mind. As ſhe paſſed along the gardens ſhe looked timidly forward, half fearing and half hoping that he might appear in the crowd; and the diſappointment ſhe felt on not ſeeing him, told her, that ſhe had hoped more than ſhe had feared.

Montoni ſoon after joined the party. He muttered over ſome ſhort ſpeech about regret

regret for having been ſo long detained elſewhere, when he knew he ſhould have the pleaſure of ſeeing Madame Cheron here; and ſhe, receiving the apology with the air of a pettiſh girl, addreſſed herſelf entirely to Cavigni, who looked archly at Montoni, as if he would have ſaid, "I will not triumph over you too much; I will have the goodneſs to bear my honours meekly; but look ſharp, ſignor, or I ſhall certainly run away with your prize."

The ſupper was ſerved in different pavilions in the gardens, as well as in one large ſaloon of the chateau, and with more of taſte, than either of ſplendour, or even of plenty. Madame Cheron and her party ſupped with Madame Clairval in the ſaloon, and Emily, with difficulty, diſguiſed her emotion, when ſhe ſaw Valancourt placed at the ſame table with herſelf. There, Madame Cheron having ſurveyed him with high diſpleaſure, ſaid to ſome perſon who ſat next to her, "Pray, who *is* that young man?" "It is the Chevalier Valancourt,"

was

was the anſwer. "Yes, I am not ignorant of his name, but who is this Chevalier Valancourt, that thus intrudes himſelf at this table?" The attention of the perſon, to whom ſhe ſpoke, was called off before ſhe received a ſecond reply. The table, at which they ſat, was very long, and, Valancourt being ſeated, with his partner, near the bottom, and Emily near the top, the diſtance between them may account for his not immediately perceiving her. She avoided looking to that end of the table, but, whenever her eyes happened to glance towards it, ſhe obſerved him converſing with his beautiful companion, and the obſervation did not contribute to reſtore her peace, any more than the accounts ſhe heard of the fortune and accompliſhments of this ſame lady.

Madame Cheron, to whom theſe remarks were ſometimes addreſſed, becauſe they ſupported topics for trivial converſation, ſeemed indefatigable in her attempts to depreciate Valancourt, towards whom ſhe felt

all the petty reſentment of a narrow pride. "I admire the lady," ſaid ſhe, "but I muſt condemn her choice of a partner." "Oh, the Chevalier Valancourt is one of the moſt accompliſhed young men we have," replied the lady, to whom this remark was addreſſed; "it is whiſpered, that Mademoiſelle D'Emery, and her very large fortune, are to be his."

"Impoſſible!" exclaimed Madame Cheron, reddening with vexation, "it is impoſſible that ſhe can be ſo deſtitute of taſte; he has ſo little the air of a perſon of condition, that, if I did not ſee him at the table of Madame Clairval, I ſhould never have ſuſpected him to be one. I have beſides particular reaſons for believing the report to be erroneous."

"I cannot doubt the truth of it," replied the lady gravely, diſguſted by the abrupt contradiction ſhe had received, concerning her opinion of Valancourt's merit. "You will, perhaps, doubt it," ſaid Madame Cheron, "when I aſſure you, that it was only this morning that I rejected his ſuit."

This

This was ſaid without any intention of impoſing the meaning it conveyed, but ſimply from a habit of conſidering herſelf to be the moſt important perſon in every affair that concerned her niece, and becauſe literally ſhe had rejected Valancourt. "Your reaſons are indeed ſuch as cannot be doubted," replied the lady, with an ironical ſmile.—"Any more than the diſcernment of the Chevalier Valancourt," added Cavigni, who ſtood by the chair of Madame Cheron, and had heard her arrogate to herſelf, as he thought, a diſtinction which had been paid to her niece. "His diſcernment *may* be juſtly queſtioned, ſignor," ſaid Madame Cheron, who was not flattered by what ſhe underſtood to be an encomium on Emily.

"Alas!" exclaimed Cavigni, ſurveying Madame Cheron with affected ecſtaſy, "how vain is that aſſertion, while that face —that ſhape—that air—combine to refute it! Unhappy Valancourt! his diſcernment has been his deſtruction."

Emily looked ſurpriſed and embarraſſed; the lady, who had lately ſpoken, aſtoniſhed,

and

and Madame Cheron, who, though ſhe did not perfectly underſtand this ſpeech, was very ready to believe herſelf complimented by it, ſaid ſmilingly, "O Signor! you are very gallant; but thoſe, who hear you vindicate the chevalier's diſcernment, will ſuppoſe that I am the object of it."

"They cannot doubt it," replied Cavigni, bowing low.

"And would not that be very mortifying, Signor?"

"Unqueſtionably it would," ſaid Cavigni.

"I cannot endure the thought," ſaid Madame Cheron.

"It is not to be endured," replied Cavigni.

"What can be done to prevent ſo humiliating a miſtake?" rejoined Madame Cheron.

"Alas! I cannot aſſiſt you," replied Cavigni, with a deliberating air. "Your only chance of refuting the calumny, and of making people underſtand what you wiſh

them to believe, is to perſiſt in your firſt aſſertion; for, when they are told of the chevalier's want of diſcernment, it is poſſible they may ſuppoſe he never preſumed to diſtreſs you with his admiration.—But then again—that diffidence, which renders you ſo inſenſible to your own perfections—they will conſider this, and Valancourt's taſte will not be doubted, though you arraign it. In ſhort, they will, in ſpite of your endeavours, continue to believe, what might very naturally have occurred to them without any hint of mine—that the chevalier has taſte enough to admire a beautiful woman."

"All this is very diſtreſſing!" ſaid Madame Cheron, with a profound ſigh.

"May I be allowed to aſk what is ſo diſtreſſing?" ſaid Madame Clairval, who was ſtruck with the rueful countenance and doleful accent, with which this was delivered.

"It is a delicate ſubject," replied Madame Cheron, "a very mortifying one to me." "I am concerned to hear it," ſaid Ma-

dame Clairval, " I hope nothing has occurred, this evening, particularly to diſtreſs you?" " Alas, yes! within this half hour; and I know not where the report may end;—my pride was never ſo ſhocked before, but I aſſure you the report is totally void of foundation." " Good God!" exclaimed Madame Clairval, " what can be done? Can you point out any way, by which I can aſſiſt, or conſole you?"

" The only way, by which you can do either," replied Madame Cheron, " is to contradict the report wherever you go."

" Well! but pray inform me what I am to contradict."

" It is ſo very humiliating, that I know not how to mention it," continued Madame Cheron, " but you ſhall judge. Do you obſerve that young man ſeated near the bottom of the table, who is converſing with Mademoiſelle D'Emery?" " Yes, I perceive whom you mean." " You obſerve how little he has the air of a perſon of condition; I was ſaying juſt now, that I ſhould

not have thought him a gentleman, if I had not ſeen him at this table." "Well! but the report," ſaid Madame Clairval, "let me underſtand the ſubject of your diſtreſs." "Ah! the ſubject of my diſtreſs," replied Madame Cheron; "this perſon, whom nobody knows—(I beg pardon, madam, I did not conſider what I ſaid)—this impertinent young man, having had the preſumption to addreſs my niece, has, I fear, given riſe to a report, that he had declared himſelf my admirer. Now only conſider how very mortifying ſuch a report muſt be! You, I know, will feel for my ſituation. A woman of my condition!—think how degrading even the rumour of ſuch an alliance muſt be."

"Degrading indeed, my poor friend!" ſaid Madame Clairval. "You may rely upon it, I will contradict the report wherever I go;" as ſhe ſaid which, ſhe turned her attention upon another part of the company; and Cavigni, who had hitherto appeared a grave ſpectator of the ſcene, now fearing

he

he ſhould be unable to ſmother the laugh, that convulſed him, walked abruptly away.

"I perceive you do not know," ſaid the lady who ſat near Madame Cheron, "that the gentleman you have been ſpeaking of is Madame Clairval's nephew!" "Impoſſible!" exclaimed Madame Cheron, who now began to perceive, that ſhe had been totally miſtaken in her judgment of Valancourt, and to praiſe him aloud with as much ſervility, as ſhe had before cenſured him with frivolous malignity.

Emily, who, during the greater part of this converſation, had been ſo abſorbed in thought as to be ſpared the pain of hearing it, was now extremely ſurpriſed by her aunt's praiſe of Valancourt, with whoſe relationſhip to Madame Clairval ſhe was unacquainted; but ſhe was not ſorry when Madame Cheron, who, though ſhe now tried to appear unconcerned, was really much embarraſſed, prepared to withdraw immediately after ſupper. Montoni then came to hand Madame Cheron to her car-

riage, and Cavigni, with an arch ſolemnity of countenance, followed with Emily, who, as ſhe wiſhed them good night, and drew up the glaſs, ſaw Valancourt among the crowd at the gates. Before the carriage drove off, he diſappeared. Madame Cheron forbore to mention him to Emily, and, as ſoon as they reached the chateau, they ſeparated for the night.

On the following morning, as Emily ſat at breakfaſt with her aunt, a letter was brought to her, of which ſhe knew the hand-writing upon the cover; and, as ſhe received it with a trembling hand, Madame Cheron haſtily enquired from whom it came. Emily, with her leave, broke the ſeal, and, obſerving the ſignature of Valancourt, gave it unread to her aunt, who received it with impatience; and, as ſhe looked it over, Emily endeavoured to read on her countenance its contents. Having returned the letter to her niece, whoſe eyes aſked if ſhe might examine it, "Yes, read it, child," ſaid Madame Cheron, in a manner

ner leſs ſevere than ſhe had expected, and Emily had, perhaps, never before ſo willingly obeyed her aunt. In this letter Valancourt ſaid little of the interview of the preceding day, but concluded with declaring, that he would accept his diſmiſſion from Emily only, and with entreating, that ſhe would allow him to wait upon her, on the approaching evening. When ſhe read this, ſhe was aſtoniſhed at the moderation of Madame Cheron, and looked at her with timid expectation, as ſhe ſaid ſorrowfully—"What am I to ſay, Madam?"

"Why—we muſt ſee the young man, I believe," replied her aunt, "and hear what he has further to ſay for himſelf. You may tell him he may come." Emily dared ſcarcely credit what ſhe heard. "Yet, ſtay," added Madame Cheron, "I will tell him ſo myſelf." She called for pen and ink; Emily ſtill not daring to truſt the emotions ſhe felt, and almoſt ſinking beneath them. Her ſurpriſe would have been leſs had ſhe overheard, on the preceding evening, what Madame Cheron had not forgotten—that

Valancourt was the nephew of Madame Clairval.

What were the particulars of her aunt's note Emily did not learn, but the reſult was a viſit from Valancourt in the evening, whom Madame Cheron received alone, and they had a long converſation before Emily was called down. When ſhe entered the room, her aunt was converſing with complacency, and ſhe ſaw the eyes of Valancourt, as he impatiently roſe, animated with hope.

"We have been talking over this affair," ſaid Madame Cheron, "the chevalier has been telling me, that the late Monſieur Clairval was the brother of the Counteſs de Duvarney, his mother. I only wiſh he had mentioned his relationſhip to Madame Clairval before, I certainly ſhould have conſidered that circumſtance as a ſufficient introduction to my houſe." Valancourt bowed, and was going to addreſs Emily, but her aunt prevented him. "I have, therefore, conſented, that you ſhall receive his viſits; and, though I will not bind myſelf

ſelf by any promiſe, or ſay, that I ſhall conſider him as my nephew, yet I ſhall permit the intercourſe, and ſhall look forward to any further connection as an event which may poſſibly take place in a courſe of years, provided the chevalier riſes in his profeſſion, or any circumſtance occurs, which may make it prudent for him to take a wife. But Monſ. Valancourt will obſerve, and you too, Emily, that, till that happens, I poſitively forbid any thoughts of marrying."

Emily's countenance, during this coarſe ſpeech, varied every inſtant, and, towards its concluſion, her diſtreſs had ſo much increaſed, that ſhe was on the point of leaving the room. Valancourt meanwhile, ſcarcely leſs embarraſſed, did not dare to look at her, for whom ſhe was thus diſtreſſed; but, when Madame Cheron was ſilent, he ſaid, "Flattering, madam, as your approbation is to me—highly as I am honoured by it—I have yet ſo much to fear, that I ſcarcely dare to hope." "Pray, ſir, explain your-

ſelf," ſaid Madame Cheron; an unexpected requiſition, which embarraſſed Valancourt again, and almoſt overcame him with confuſion, at circumſtances, on which, had he been only a ſpectator of the ſcene, he would have ſmiled.

"Till I receive Mademoiſelle St. Aubert's permiſſion to accept your indulgence," ſaid he, falteringly—"till ſhe allows me to hope—"

"O! is that all?" interrupted Madame Cheron. "Well, I will take upon me to anſwer for her. But at the ſame time, ſir, give me leave to obſerve to you, that I am her guardian, and that I expect, in every inſtance, that my will is hers."

As ſhe ſaid this, ſhe roſe and quitted the room, leaving Emily and Valancourt in a ſtate of mutual embarraſſment; and, when Valancourt's hopes enabled him to overcome his fears, and to addreſs her with the zeal and ſincerity ſo natural to him, it was a conſiderable time before ſhe was ſufficiently

ciently recovered to hear with diſtinctneſs his ſolicitations and enquiries.

The conduct of Madame Cheron in this affair had been entirely governed by ſelfiſh vanity. Valancourt, in his firſt interview, had with great candour laid open to her the true ſtate of his preſent circumſtances, and his future expectancies, and ſhe, with more prudence than humanity, had abſolutely and abruptly rejected his ſuit. She wiſhed her niece to marry ambitiouſly, not becauſe ſhe deſired to ſee her in poſſeſſion of the happineſs, which rank and wealth are uſually believed to beſtow, but becauſe ſhe deſired to partake the importance, which ſuch an alliance would give. When, therefore, ſhe diſcovered that Valancourt was the nephew of a perſon of ſo much conſequence as Madame Clairval, ſhe became anxious for the connection, ſince the proſpect it afforded of future fortune and diſtinction for Emily, promiſed the exaltation ſhe coveted for herſelf. Her calculations concerning fortune in this alli-

ance were guided rather by her wiſhes, than by any hint of Valancourt, or ſtrong appearance of probability; and, when ſhe reſted her expectation on the wealth of Madame Clairval, ſhe ſeemed totally to have forgotten, that the latter had a daughter. Valancourt, however, had not forgotten this circumſtance, and the conſideration of it had made him ſo modeſt in his expectations from Madame Clairval, that he had not even named the relationſhip in his firſt converſation with Madame Cheron. But, whatever might be the future fortune of Emily, the preſent diſtinction, which the connection would afford for herſelf, was certain, ſince the ſplendour of Madame Clairval's eſtabliſhment was ſuch as to excite the general envy and partial imitation of the neighbourhood. Thus had ſhe conſented to involve her niece in an engagement, to which ſhe ſaw only a diſtant and uncertain concluſion, with as little conſideration of her happineſs, as when ſhe had ſo precipitately forbade it: for though ſhe herſelf poſ-

ſeſſed the means of rendering this union not only certain, but prudent, yet to do ſo was no part of her preſent intention.

From this period Valancourt made frequent viſits to Madame Cheron, and Emily paſſed in his ſociety the happieſt hours ſhe had known ſince the death of her father. They were both too much engaged by the preſent moments to give ſerious conſideration to the future. They loved and were beloved, and ſaw not, that the very attachment, which formed the delight of their preſent days, might poſſibly occaſion the ſufferings of years. Meanwhile, Madame Cheron's intercourſe with Madame Clairval became more frequent than before, and her vanity was already gratified by the opportunity of proclaiming, wherever ſhe went, the attachment that ſubſiſted between their nephew and niece.

Montoni was now alſo become a daily gueſt at the chateau, and Emily was compelled to obſerve, that he really was a ſuitor, and a favoured ſuitor, to her aunt.

Thus

Thus paſſed the winter months, not only in peace, but in happineſs, to Valancourt and Emily; the ſtation of his regiment being ſo near Tholouſe, as to allow this frequent intercourſe. The pavilion on the terrace was the favourite ſcene of their interviews, and there Emily, with Madame Cheron, would work, while Valancourt read aloud works of genius and taſte, liſtened to her enthuſiaſm, expreſſed his own, and caught new opportunities of obſerving that their minds were formed to conſtitute the happineſs of each other, the ſame taſte, the ſame noble and benevolent ſentiments animating each.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

"As when a ſhepherd of the Hebrid-Iſles,
Placed far amid the melancholy main,
(Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles,
Or that aerial beings ſometimes deign
To ſtand embodied to our ſenſes plain)
Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
The whilſt in ocean Phœbus dips his wain,
A vaſt aſſembly moving to and fro,
Then all at once in air diſſolves the wondrous ſhow."

CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

MADAME Cheron's avarice at length yielded to her vanity. Some very ſplendid entertainments, which Madame Clairval had given, and the general adulation, which was paid her, made the former more anxious than before to ſecure an alliance, that would ſo much exalt her in her own opinion and in that of the world. She propoſed terms, for the immediate marriage of her niece,

and

and offered to give Emily a dower, provided Madame Clairval obſerved equal terms, on the part of her nephew. Madame Clairval liſtened to the propoſal, and, conſidering that Emily was the apparent heireſs of her aunt's wealth, accepted it. Meanwhile Emily knew nothing of the tranſaction, till Madame Cheron informed her, that ſhe muſt make preparation for the nuptials, which would be celebrated without further delay; then, aſtoniſhed and wholly unable to account for this ſudden concluſion, which Valancourt had not ſolicited (for he was ignorant of what had paſſed between the elder ladies, and had not dared to hope ſuch good fortune), ſhe deciſively objected to it. Madame Cheron, however, quite as jealous of contradiction now, as ſhe had been formerly, contended for a ſpeedy marriage with as much vehemence as ſhe had formerly oppoſed whatever had the moſt remote poſſibility of leading to it; and Emily's ſcruples diſappeared, when ſhe again ſaw Valancourt, who was now informed of the happineſs, deſigned

ſigned for him, and came to claim a promiſe of it from herſelf.

While preparations were making for theſe nuptials, Montoni became the acknowledged lover of Madame Cheron; and, though Madame Clairval was much diſpleaſed, when ſhe heard of the approaching connection, and was willing to prevent that of Valancourt with Emily, her conſcience told her, that ſhe had no right thus to trifle with their peace, and Madame Clairval, though a woman of faſhion, was far leſs advanced than her friend in the art of deriving ſatisfaction from diſtinction and admiration, rather than from conſcience.

Emily obſerved with concern the aſcendancy, which Montoni had acquired over Madame Cheron, as well as the increaſing frequency of his viſits; and her own opinion of this Italian was confirmed by that of Valancourt, who had always expreſſed a diſlike of him. As ſhe was, one morning, ſitting at work in the pavilion, enjoying the pleaſant freſhneſs of ſpring, whoſe colours were

now

now ſpread upon the landſcape, and liſtening to Valancourt, who was reading, but who often laid aſide the book to converſe, ſhe received a ſummons to attend Madame Cheron immediately, and had ſcarcely entered the dreſſing-room, when ſhe obſerved with ſurpriſe the dejection of her aunt's countenance, and the contraſted gaiety of her dreſs. "So, niece!"—ſaid Madame, and ſhe ſtopped under ſome degree of embarraſſment.—"I ſent for you,—I—I wiſhed to ſee you; I have news to tell you. From this hour you muſt conſider the Signor Montoni as your uncle—we were married this morning."

Aſtoniſhed—not ſo much at the marriage, as at the ſecrecy with which it had been concluded, and the agitation with which it was announced, Emily, at length, attributed the privacy to the wiſh of Montoni, rather than of her aunt. His wife, however, intended, that the contrary ſhould be believed, and therefore added, "You ſee I wiſhed to avoid a buſtle; but now the ceremony is

over

over I ſhall do ſo no longer, and I wiſh to announce to my ſervants, that they muſt receive the Signor Montoni for their maſter." Emily made a feeble attempt to congratulate her on theſe apparently imprudent nuptials. "I ſhall now celebrate my marriage with ſome ſplendour," continued Madame Montoni, "and to ſave time I ſhall avail myſelf of the preparation that has been made for yours, which will, of courſe, be delayed a little while. Such of your wedding clothes as are ready I ſhall expect you will appear in, to do honour to this feſtival. I alſo wiſh you to inform Monſieur Valancourt, that I have changed my name, and he will acquaint Madame Clairval. In a few days I ſhall give a grand entertainment, at which I ſhall requeſt their preſence."

Emily was ſo loſt in ſurpriſe and various thought, that ſhe made Madame Montoni ſcarcely any reply, but, at her deſire, ſhe returned to inform Valancourt of what had paſſed. Surpriſe was not his predominant emotion on hearing of theſe haſty nuptials; and,

and, when he learned, that they were to be the means of delaying his own, and that the very ornaments of the chateau, which had been prepared to grace the nuptial day of his Emily, were to be degraded to the celebration of Madame Montoni's, grief and indignation agitated him alternately. He could conceal neither from the obſervation of Emily, whoſe efforts to abſtract him from theſe ſerious emotions, and to laugh at the apprehenſive conſiderations, that aſſailed him, were ineffectual; and when, at length, he took leave, there was an earneſt tenderneſs in his manner, that extremely affected her; ſhe even ſhed tears, when he diſappeared at the end of the terrace, yet knew not exactly why ſhe ſhould do ſo.

Montoni now took poſſeſſion of the chateau and the command of its inhabitants, with the eaſe of a man, who had long conſidered it to be his own. His friend Cavigni, who had been extremely ſerviceable, in having paid Madame Cheron the attention and flattery, which ſhe required, but from which

Montoni

Montoni too often revolted, had apartments aſſigned to him, and received from the domeſtics an equal degree of obedience with the maſter of the manſion.

Within a few days, Madame Montoni, as ſhe had promiſed, gave a magnificent entertainment to a very numerous company, among whom was Valancourt; but at which Madame Clairval excuſed herſelf from attending. There was a concert, ball and ſupper. Valancourt was, of courſe, Emily's partner, and though, when he gave a look to the decorations of the apartments, he could not but remember, that they were deſigned for other feſtivities, than thoſe they now contributed to celebrate, he endeavoured to check his concern by conſidering, that a little while only would elapſe before they would be given to their original deſtination. During this evening, Madame Montoni danced, laughed and talked inceſſantly; while Montoni, ſilent, reſerved, and ſomewhat haughty, ſeemed

ſeemed weary of the parade, and of the frivolous company it had drawn together.

This was the firſt and the laſt entertainment, given in celebration of their nuptials. Montoni, though the ſeverity of his temper and the gloomineſs of his pride prevented him from enjoying ſuch feſtivities, was extremely willing to promote them. It was ſeldom, that he could meet in any company a man of more addreſs, and ſtill ſeldomer one of more underſtanding, than himſelf; the balance of advantage in ſuch parties, or in the connections, which might ariſe from them, muſt, therefore, be on his ſide; and, knowing, as he did, the ſelfiſh purpoſes, for which they are generally frequented, he had no objection to meaſure his talents of diſſimulation with thoſe of any other competitor for diſtinction and plunder. But his wife, who, when her own intereſt was immediately concerned, had ſometimes more diſcernment than vanity, acquired a conſciouſneſs of her inferiority to other women, in perſonal attractions,

tractions, which, uniting with the jealouſy natural to the diſcovery, counteracted his readineſs for mingling with all the parties Tholouſe could afford. Till ſhe had, as ſhe ſuppoſed, the affections of an huſband to loſe, ſhe had no motive for diſcovering the unwelcome truth, and it had never obtruded itſelf upon her; but, now that it influenced her policy, ſhe oppoſed her huſband's inclination for company, with the more eagerneſs, becauſe ſhe believed him to be really as well received in the female ſociety of the place, as, during his addreſſes to her, he had affected to be.

A few weeks only had elapſed, ſince the marriage, when Madame Montoni informed Emily, that the Signor intended to return to Italy, as ſoon as the neceſſary preparation could be made for ſo long a journey. "We ſhall go to Venice," ſaid ſhe, "where the Signor has a fine manſion, and from thence to his eſtate in Tuſcany. Why do you look ſo grave, child?—You, who are ſo fond of a romantic country and fine views,

views, will doubtleſs be delighted with this journey."

"Am I then to be of the party, madam?" ſaid Emily, with extreme ſurpriſe and emotion. "Moſt certainly," replied her aunt, "how could you imagine we ſhould leave you behind? But I ſee you are thinking of the Chevalier; he is not yet, I believe, informed of the journey, but he very ſoon will be ſo. Signor Montoni is gone to acquaint Madame Clairval of our journey, and to ſay, that the propoſed connection between the families muſt from this time be thought of no more."

The unfeeling manner, in which Madame Montoni thus informed her niece, that ſhe muſt be ſeparated, perhaps for ever, from the man, with whom ſhe was on the point of being united for life, added to the diſmay, which ſhe muſt otherwiſe have ſuffered at ſuch intelligence. When ſhe could ſpeak ſhe aſked the cauſe of the ſudden change in Madame's ſentiments towards Valancourt, but the only reply ſhe could obtain was, that the Signor had forbade the connection, conſidering

conſidering it to be greatly inferior to what Emily might reaſonably expect.

"I now leave the affair entirely to the Signor," added Madame Montoni, "but I muſt ſay, that M. Valancourt never was a favourite with me, and I was overperſuaded, or I ſhould not have given my conſent to the connection. I was weak enough—I am ſo fooliſh ſometimes!—to ſuffer other people's uneaſineſs to affect me, and ſo my better judgment yielded to your affliction. But the Signor has very properly pointed out the folly of this, and he ſhall not have to reprove me a ſecond time. I am determined that you ſhall ſubmit to thoſe, who know how to guide you better than yourſelf—I am determined, that you ſhall be conformable."

Emily would have been aſtoniſhed at the aſſertions of this eloquent ſpeech, had not her mind been ſo overwhelmed by the ſudden ſhock it had received, that ſhe ſcarcely heard a word of what was latterly addreſſed to her. Whatever were the weakneſſes of Madame Montoni, ſhe might have avoided

to accuſe herſelf with thoſe of compaſſion and tenderneſs to the feelings of others, and eſpecially to thoſe of Emily. It was the ſame ambition, that lately prevailed upon her to ſolicit an alliance with Madame Clairval's family, which induced her to withdraw from it, now that her marriage with Montoni had exalted her ſelf-conſequence, and, with it, her views for her niece.

Emily was, at this time, too much affected to employ either remonſtrance, or entreaty on this topic; and when, at length, ſhe attempted the latter, her emotion overcame her ſpeech, and ſhe retired to her apartment, to think, if in the preſent ſtate of her mind to think was poſſible, upon this ſudden and overwhelming ſubject. It was very long, before her ſpirits were ſufficiently compoſed to permit the reflection, which, when it came, was dark and even terrible. She ſaw, that Montoni ſought to aggrandiſe himſelf in his diſpoſal of her, and it occurred, that his friend Cavigni was the perſon, for whom

whom he was intereſted. The proſpect of going to Italy was ſtill rendered darker, when ſhe conſidered the tumultuous ſituation of that country, then torn by civil commotion, where every petty ſtate was at war with its neighbour, and even every caſtle liable to the attack of an invader. She conſidered the perſon, to whoſe immediate guidance ſhe would be committed, and the vaſt diſtance, that was to ſeparate her from Valancourt, and, at the recollection of him, every other image vaniſhed from her mind, and every thought was again obſcured by grief.

In this perturbed ſtate ſhe paſſed ſome hours, and, when ſhe was ſummoned to dinner, ſhe entreated permiſſion to remain in her own apartment; but Madame Montoni was alone, and the requeſt was refuſed. Emily and her aunt ſaid little during the repaſt; the one occupied by her griefs, the other engroſſed by the diſappointment, which the unexpected abſence of Montoni occaſioned; for not only was her vanity piqued by the neglect, but her jealouſy alarmed by

what ſhe conſidered as a myſterious engagement. When the cloth was drawn and they were alone, Emily renèwed the mention of Valancourt; but her aunt, neither ſoftened to pity, or awakened to remorſe, became enraged, that her will ſhould be oppoſed, and the authority of Montoni queſtioned, though this was done by Emily with her uſual gentleneſs, who, after a long and torturing converſation, retired in tears.

As ſhe croſſed the hall, a perſon entered it by the great door, whom, as her eyes haſtily glanced that way, ſhe imagined to be Montoni, and ſhe was paſſing on with quicker ſteps, when ſhe heard the well-known voice of Valancourt.

"Emily, O! my Emily!" cried he in a tone faltering with impatience, while ſhe turned, and, as he advanced, was alarmed at the expreſſion of his countenance and the eager deſperation of his air. "In tears, Emily! I would ſpeak with you," ſaid he, "I have much to ſay; conduct me where

we

we may converſe. But you tremble—you are ill! Let me lead you to a ſeat."

He obſerved the open door of an apartment, and haſtily took her hand to lead her thither; but ſhe attempted to withdraw it, and ſaid, with a languid ſmile, "I am better already; if you wiſh to ſee my aunt ſhe is in the dining-parlour." "I muſt ſpeak with *you*, my Emily," replied Valancourt. "Good God! is it already come to this? Are you indeed ſo willing to reſign me? But this is an improper place—I am overheard. Let me entreat your attention, if only for a few minutes." "When you have ſeen my aunt," ſaid Emily. "I was wretched enough when I came hither," exclaimed Valancourt, "do not increaſe my miſery by this coldneſs—this cruel refuſal."

The deſpondency, with which he ſpoke this, affected her almoſt to tears, but ſhe perſiſted in refuſing to hear him, till he had converſed with Madame Montoni. "Where is her huſband, where, then, is Montoni!"

ſaid Valancourt, in an altered tone, "it is he to whom I muſt ſpeak."

Emily, terrified for the conſequence of the indignation, that flaſhed in his eyes, tremblingly aſſured him, that Montoni was at home, and entreated he would endeavour to moderate his reſentment. At the tremulous accents of her voice, his eyes ſoftened inſtantly from wildneſs into tenderneſs. "You are ill, Emily," ſaid he, "they will deſtroy us both! Forgive me, that I dared to doubt your affection."

Emily no longer oppoſed him, as he led her into an adjoining parlour; the manner, in which he had named Montoni, had ſo much alarmed her for his own ſafety, that ſhe was now only anxious to prevent the conſequences of his juſt reſentment. He liſtened to her entreaties, with attention, but replied to them only with looks of deſpondency and tenderneſs, concealing, as much as poſſible, the ſentiments he felt toward Montoni, that he might ſooth the apprehenſions which diſtreſſed her. But ſhe ſaw

the

the veil he had ſpread over his reſentment, and, his aſſumed tranquillity only alarming her more, ſhe urged, at length, the impolicy of forcing an interview with Montoni, and of taking any meaſure, which might render their ſeparation irremediable. Valancourt yielded to theſe remonſtrances, and her affecting entreaties drew from him a promiſe, that, however Montoni might perſiſt in his deſign of diſuniting them, he would not ſeek to redreſs his wrongs by violence. "For my ſake," ſaid Emily, "let the conſideration of what I ſhould ſuffer deter you from ſuch a mode of revenge!" "For your ſake, Emily," replied Valancourt, his eyes filling with tears of tenderneſs and grief, while he gazed upon her. "Yes—yes—I ſhall ſubdue myſelf. But, though I have given you my ſolemn promiſe to do this, do not expect that I can tamely ſubmit to the authority of Montoni; if I could, I ſhould be unworthy of you. Yet, O Emily! how long may he condemn me

to live without you,—how long may it be before you return to France!"

Emily endeavoured to ſooth him with aſſurances of her unalterable affection, and by repreſenting, that, in little more than a year, ſhe ſhould be her own miſtreſs, as far as related to her aunt, from whoſe guardianſhip her age would then releaſe her; aſſurances, which gave little conſolation to Valancourt, who conſidered, that ſhe would then be in Italy and in the power of thoſe, whoſe dominion over her would not ceaſe with their rights; but he affected to be conſoled by them. Emily, comforted by the promiſe ſhe had obtained, and by his apparent compoſure, was about to leave him, when her aunt entered the room. She threw a glance of ſharp reproof upon her niece, who immediately withdrew, and of haughty diſpleaſure upon Valancourt.

"This is not the conduct I ſhould have expected from you, ſir," ſaid ſhe; "I did not expect to ſee you in my houſe, after you had been informed, that your viſits were

were no longer agreeable, much leſs, that you would ſeek a clandeſtine interview with my niece, and that ſhe would grant one."

Valancourt, perceiving it neceſſary to vindicate Emily from ſuch a deſign, explained that the purpoſe of his own viſit had been to requeſt an interview with Montoni, and he then entered upon the ſubject of it, with the tempered ſpirit which the ſex, rather than the reſpectability, of Madame Montoni demanded.

His expoſtulations were anſwered with ſevere rebuke; ſhe lamented again, that her prudence had ever yielded to what ſhe termed compaſſion, and added, that ſhe was ſo ſenſible of the folly of her former conſent, that, to prevent the poſſibility of a repetition, ſhe had committed the affair entirely to the conduct of Signor Montoni.

The feeling eloquence of Valancourt, however, at length, made her ſenſible in ſome meaſure of her unworthy conduct, and ſhe became ſuſceptible to ſhame, but not remorſe: ſhe hated Valancourt, who awakened her to this painful ſenſation, and, in proportion as

ſhe grew diſſatisfied with herſelf, her abhorrence of him increaſed. This was alſo the more inveterate, becauſe his tempered words and manner were ſuch as, without accuſing her, compelled her to accuſe herſelf, and neither left her hope, that the odious portrait was the caricature of his prejudice, or afforded her an excuſe for expreſſing the violent reſentment, with which ſhe contemplated it. At length, her anger roſe to ſuch an height, that Valancourt was compelled to leave the houſe abruptly, leſt he ſhould forfeit his own eſteem by an intemperate reply. He was then convinced, that from Madame Montoni he had nothing to hope, for what of either pity or juſtice could be expected from a perſon, who could feel the pain of guilt without the humility of repentance?

To Montoni he looked with equal deſpondency, ſince it was nearly evident, that this plan of ſeparation originated with him, and it was not probable, that he would relinquiſh his own views to entreaties, or remonſtrances, which he muſt have foreſeen

and

and have been prepared to reſiſt. Yet, remembering his promiſe to Emily, and more ſolicitous, concerning his love, than jealous of his conſequence, Valancourt was careful to do nothing that might unneceſſarily irritate Montoni; he wrote to him, therefore, not to demand an interview, but to ſolicit one, and, having done this, he endeavoured to wait with calmneſs his reply.

Madame Clairval was paſſive in the affair. When ſhe gave her approbation to Valancourt's marriage, it was in the belief, that Emily would be the heireſs of Madame Montoni's fortune; and though, upon the nuptials of the latter, when ſhe perceived the fallacy of this expectation, her conſcience had withheld her from adopting any meaſure to prevent the union, her benevolence was not ſufficiently active to impel her towards any ſtep, that might now promote it. She was, on the contrary, ſecretly pleaſed, that Valancourt was releaſed from an engagement, which ſhe conſidered to be as in-

ferior, in point of fortune, to his merit, as his alliance was thought by Montoni to be humiliating to the beauty of Emily; and, though her pride was wounded by this rejection of a member of her family, she disdained to shew resentment otherwise, than by silence.

Montoni, in his reply to Valancourt, said, that as an interview could neither remove the objections of the one, or overcome the wishes of the other, it would serve only to produce useless altercation between them. He, therefore, thought proper to refuse it.

In consideration of the policy suggested by Emily, and of his promise to her, Valancourt restrained the impulse, that urged him to the house of Montoni, to demand what had been denied to his entreaties. He only repeated his solicitations to see him; seconding them with all the arguments his situation could suggest. Thus several days passed in remonstrance, on one side, and inflexible denial, on the other; for, whether it was fear, or shame, or the hatred,

hatred, which reſults from both, that made Montoni ſhun the man he had injured, he was peremptory in his refuſal, and was neither ſoftened to pity by the agony, which Valancourt's letters pourtrayed, or awakened to a repentance of his own injuſtice by the ſtrong remonſtrances he employed. At length, Valancourt's letters were returned unopened, and then, in the firſt moments of paſſionate deſpair, he forgot every promiſe to Emily, except the ſolemn one, which bound him to avoid violence, and haſtened to Montoni's chateau, determined to ſee him by whatever other means might be neceſſary. Montoni was denied, and Valancourt, when he afterwards enquired for Madame, and Ma'amſelle St. Aubert, was abſolutely refuſed admittance by the ſervants. Not chooſing to ſubmit himſelf to a conteſt with theſe, he at length departed, and, returning home in a ſtate of mind approaching to phrenſy, wrote to Emily of what had paſſed, expreſſed without reſtraint all the agony of his heart, and entreated, that, ſince he muſt

not

not otherwiſe hope to ſee her immediately, ſhe would allow him an interview unknown to Montoni. Soon after he had diſpatched this, his paſſions becoming more temperate, he was ſenſible of the error he had committed in having given Emily new ſubject of diſtreſs in the ſtrong mention of his own ſuffering, and would have given half the world, had it been his, to recover the letter. Emily, however, was ſpared the pain ſhe muſt have received from it, by the ſuſpicious policy of Madame Montoni, who had ordered, that all letters, addreſſed to her niece, ſhould be delivered to herſelf, and who, after having peruſed this and indulged the expreſſions of reſentment, which Valancourt's mention of Montoni provoked, had conſigned it to the flames.

Montoni, meanwhile, every day more impatient to leave France, gave repeated orders for diſpatch to the ſervants employed in preparations for the journey, and to the perſons, with whom he was tranſacting ſome particular buſineſs. He preſerved a ſteady

ſilence

ſilence to the letters in which Valancourt, deſpairing of greater good, and having ſubdued the paſſion, that had tranſgreſſed againſt his policy, ſolicited only the indulgence of being allowed to bid Emily farewell. But, when the latter learned that ſhe was really to ſet out in a very few days, and that it was deſigned he ſhould ſee her no more, forgetting every conſideration of prudence, he dared, in a ſecond letter to Emily, to propoſe a clandeſtine marriage. This alſo was tranſmitted to Madame Montoni, and the laſt day of Emily's ſtay at Tholouſe arrived, without affording Valancourt even a line to ſooth his ſufferings, or a hope, that he ſhould be allowed a parting interview.

During this period of torturing ſuſpenſe to Valancourt, Emily was ſunk into that kind of ſtupor, with which ſudden and irremediable misfortune ſometimes overwhelms the mind. Loving him with the tendereſt affection, and having long been accuſtomed to conſider him as the friend and com-

panion of all her future days, ſhe had no ideas of happineſs, that were not connected with him. What, then, muſt have been her ſuffering, when thus ſuddenly they were to be ſeparated, perhaps, for ever, certainly to be thrown into diſtant parts of the world, where they could ſcarcely hear of each other's exiſtence; and all this in obedience to the will of a ſtranger, for ſuch was Montoni, and of a perſon, who had but lately been anxious to haſten their nuptials! It was in vain that ſhe endeavoured to ſubdue her grief, and reſign herſelf to an event, which ſhe could not avoid. The ſilence of Valancourt afflicted more than it ſurpriſed her, ſince ſhe attributed it to its juſt occaſion; but, when the day, preceding that, on which ſhe was to quit Tholouſe, arrived, and ſhe heard no mention of his being permitted to take leave of her, grief overcame every conſideration, that had made her reluctant to ſpeak of him, and ſhe enquired of Madame Montoni, whether this conſolation had been refuſed. Her aunt informed

formed her that it had, adding, that after the provocation ſhe had herſelf received from Valancourt, in their laſt interview, and the perſecution, which the Signor had ſuffered from his letters, no entreaties ſhould avail to procure it.

"If the Chevalier expected this favour from us," ſaid ſhe, "he ſhould have conducted himſelf in a very different manner; he ſhould have waited patiently, till he knew whether we were diſpoſed to grant it, and not have come and reproved me, becauſe I did not think proper to beſtow my niece upon him,—and then have perſiſted in troubling the Signor, becauſe he did not think proper to enter into any diſpute about ſo childiſh an affair. His behaviour throughout has been extremely preſumptuous and impertinent, and I deſire, that I may never hear his name repeated, and that you will get the better of thoſe fooliſh ſorrows and whims, and look like other people, and not appear with that diſmal countenance, as if you were ready to cry. For, though you

ſay

ſay nothing, you cannot conceal your grief from my penetration. I can ſee you are ready to cry at this moment, though I am reproving you for it; aye, even now, in ſpite of my commands."

Emily, having turned away to hide her tears, quitted the room to indulge them, and the day was paſſed in an intenſity of anguiſh, ſuch as ſhe had, perhaps, never known before. When ſhe withdrew to her chamber for the night, ſhe remained in the chair where ſhe had placed herſelf, on entering the room, abſorbed in her grief, till long after every member of the family, except herſelf, was retired to reſt. She could not diveſt herſelf of a belief, that ſhe had parted with Valancourt to meet no more; a belief, which did not ariſe merely from foreſeen circumſtances, for, though the length of the journey ſhe was about to commence, the uncertainty as to the period of her return, together with the prohibitions ſhe had received, ſeemed to juſtify it, ſhe yielded alſo to an impreſſion, which ſhe miſ-

took

took for a preſentiment, that ſhe was going from Valancourt for ever. How dreadful to her imagination, too, was the diſtance that would ſeparate them—the Alps, thoſe tremendous barriers! would riſe, and whole countries extend between the regions where each muſt exiſt! To live in adjoining provinces, to live even in the ſame country, though without ſeeing him, was comparative happineſs to the conviction of this dreadful length of diſtance.

Her mind was, at length, ſo much agitated by the conſideration of her ſtate, and the belief, that ſhe had ſeen Valancourt for the laſt time, that ſhe ſuddenly became very faint, and, looking round the chamber for ſomething, that might revive her, ſhe obſerved the caſements, and had juſt ſtrength to throw one open, near which ſhe ſeated herſelf. The air recalled her ſpirits, and the ſtill moon-light, that fell upon the elms of a long avenue, fronting the window, ſomewhat ſoothed them, and determined her to try whether exerciſe and the open air would

would not relieve the intenſe pain that bound her temples. In the chateau all was ſtill; and, paſſing down the great ſtair-caſe into the hall, from whence a paſſage led immediately to the garden, ſhe ſoftly and unheard, as ſhe thought, unlocked the door, and entered the avenue. Emily paſſed on with ſteps now hurried, and now faltering, as, deceived by the ſhadows among the trees, ſhe fancied ſhe ſaw ſome perſon move in the diſtant perſpective, and feared, that it was a ſpy of Madame Montoni. Her deſire, however, to reviſit the pavilion, where ſhe had paſſed ſo many happy hours with Valancourt, and had admired with him the extenſive proſpect over Languedoc and her native Gaſcony, overcame her apprehenſion of being obſerved, and ſhe moved on towards the terrace, which, running along the upper garden, commanded the whole of the lower one, and communicated with it by a flight of marble ſteps, that terminated the avenue.

Having reached theſe ſteps, ſhe pauſed a moment

moment to look round, for her diſtance from the chateau now increaſed the fear, which the ſtillneſs and obſcurity of the hour had awakened. But, perceiving nothing that could juſtify it, ſhe aſcended to the terrace, where the moon-light ſhewed the long broad walk, with the pavilion at its extremity, while the rays ſilvered the foliage of the high trees and ſhrubs, that bordered it on the right, and the tufted ſummits of thoſe, that roſe to a level with the baluſtrade on the left, from the garden below. Her diſtance from the chateau again alarming her, ſhe pauſed to liſten; the night was ſo calm, that no ſound could have eſcaped her, but ſhe heard only the plaintive ſweetneſs of the nightingale, with the light ſhiver of the leaves, and ſhe purſued her way towards the pavilion, having reached which, its obſcurity did not prevent the emotion, that a fuller view of its well-known ſcene would have excited. The lattices were thrown back, and ſhewed beyond their embowered arch the moon-light landſcape,

landſcape, ſhadowy and ſoft; its groves, and plains extending gradually and indiſtinctly to the eye, its diſtant mountains catching a ſtronger gleam, and the nearer river reflecting the moon, and trembling to her rays.

Emily, as ſhe approached the lattice, was ſenſible of the features of this ſcene only as they ſerved to bring Valancourt more immediately to her fancy. "Ah!" ſaid ſhe, with a heavy ſigh, as ſhe threw herſelf into a chair by the window, "how often have we ſat together in this ſpot—often have looked upon that landſcape! Never, never more ſhall we view it together—never—never more, perhaps, ſhall we look upon each other!"

Her tears were ſuddenly ſtopped by terror—a voice ſpoke near her in the pavilion; ſhe ſhrieked—it ſpoke again, and ſhe diſtinguiſhed the well-known tones of Valancourt. It was indeed Valancourt who ſupported her in his arms! For ſome moments their emotion would not ſuffer either to ſpeak.

ſpeak. "Emily!" ſaid Valanourt at length, as he preſſed her hand in his, "Emily!" and he was again ſilent, but the accent, in which he had pronounced her name, expreſſed all his tenderneſs and ſorrow.

"O my Emily!" he reſumed, after a long pauſe, "I do then ſee you once again, and hear again the ſound of that voice! I have haunted this place—theſe gardens, for many—many nights, with a faint, very faint hope of ſeeing you. This was the only chance that remained for me, and, thank heaven! it has at length ſucceeded—I am not condemned to abſolute deſpair!"

Emily ſaid ſomething, ſhe ſcarcely knew what, expreſſive of her unalterable affection, and endeavoured to calm the agitation of his mind; but Valancourt could for ſome time only utter incoherent expreſſions of his emotions; and, when he was ſomewhat more compoſed, he ſaid, "I came hither, ſoon after ſun-ſet, and have been watching in the gardens, and in this pavi-

lion

lion ever ſince; for, though I had now given up all hope of ſeeing you, I could not reſolve to tear myſelf from a place ſo near to you, and ſhould probably have lingered about the chateau till morning dawned. O how heavily the moments have paſſed, yet with what various emotion have they been marked, as I ſometimes thought I heard footſteps, and fancied you were approaching, and then again—perceived only a dead and dreary ſilence! But, when you opened the door of the pavilion, and the darkneſs prevented my diſtinguiſhing with certainty, whether it was my love—my heart beat ſo ſtrongly with hopes and fears, that I could not ſpeak. The inſtant I heard the plaintive accents of your voice, my doubts vaniſhed; but not my fears, till you ſpoke of me; then, loſing the apprehenſion of alarming you in the exceſs of my emotion, I could no longer be ſilent. O Emily! theſe are moments, in which joy and grief ſtruggle ſo powerfully for

pre-

pre-eminence, that the heart can ſcarcely ſupport the conteſt!"

Emily's heart acknowledged the truth of this aſſertion, but the joy ſhe felt on thus meeting Valancourt at the very moment when ſhe was lamenting, that they muſt probably meet no more, ſoon melted into grief, as reflection ſtole over her thoughts, and imagination prompted viſions of the future. She ſtruggled to recover the calm dignity of mind, which was neceſſary to ſupport her through this laſt interview, and which Valancourt found it utterly impoſſible to attain, for the tranſports of his joy changed abruptly into thoſe of ſuffering, and he expreſſed in the moſt impaſſioned language his horror of this ſeparation, and his deſpair of their ever meeting again. Emily wept ſilently as ſhe liſtened to him, and then, trying to command her own diſtreſs, and to ſooth his, ſhe ſuggeſted every circumſtance that could lead to hope. But the energy of his fears led him inſtantly to detect the friendly fallacies, which ſhe endea-

voured to impoſe on herſelf and him, and alſo to conjure up illuſions too powerful for his reaſon.

" You are going from me," ſaid he, " to a diſtant country, O how diſtant!—to new ſociety, new friends, new admirers, with people too, who will try to make you forget me, and to promote new connections! How can I know this, and not know, that you will never return for me—never can be mine?" His voice was ſtifled by ſighs.

" You believe, then," ſaid Emily, " that the pangs I ſuffer proceed from a trivial and temporary intereſt; you believe—"

" Suffer!" interrupted Valancourt, " ſuffer for me! O Emily—how ſweet—how bitter are thoſe words! what comfort, what anguiſh do they give! I ought not to doubt the ſteadineſs of your affection, yet ſuch is the inconſiſtency of real love, that it is always awake to ſuſpicion, however unreaſonable; always requiring new aſſurances from the object of its intereſt, and thus it is, that I always feel revived, as by a new conviction, when

when your words tell me I am dear to you; and, wanting theſe, I relapſe into doubt, and too often into deſpondency." Then ſeeming to recollect himſelf, he exclaimed, "But what a wretch am I, thus to torture you, and in theſe moments, too! I, who ought to ſupport and comfort you!"

This reflection overcame Valancourt with tenderneſs, but, relapſing into deſpondency, he again felt only for himſelf, and lamented again this cruel ſeparation, in a voice and words ſo impaſſioned, that Emily could no longer ſtruggle to repreſs her own grief, or to ſooth his. Valancourt, between theſe emotions of love and pity, loſt the power, and almoſt the wiſh, of repreſſing his agitation; and, in the intervals of convulſive ſobs, he, at one moment, kiſſed away her tears, then told her cruelly, that poſſibly ſhe might never again weep for him, and then tried to ſpeak more calmly, but only exclaimed, "O Emily—my heart will break! —I cannot—cannot leave you! Now—I gaze upon that countenance, now I hold

you in my arms! a little while, and all this will appear a dream. I ſhall look, and cannot ſee you; ſhall try to recollect your features—and the impreſſion will be fled from my imagination;—to hear the tones of your voice, and even memory will be ſilent!—I cannot, cannot leave you! Why ſhould we conſide the happineſs of our whole lives to the will of people, who have no right to interrupt, and, except in giving you to me, have no power to promote it? O Emily, venture to truſt your own heart, venture to be mine for ever!" His voice trembled, and he was ſilent; Emily continued to weep, and was ſilent alſo, when Valancourt proceeded to propoſe an immediate marriage, and that, at an early hour on the following morning, ſhe ſhould quit Madame Montoni's houſe, and be conducted by him to the church of the Auguſtines, where a friar ſhould await to unite them.

The ſilence, with which ſhe liſtened to a propoſal dictated by love and deſpair, and enforced

enforced at a moment, when it ſeemed ſcarcely poſſible for her to oppoſe it;—when her heart was ſoftened by the ſorrows of a ſeparation, that might be eternal, and her reaſon obſcured by the illuſions of love and terror, encouraged him to hope, that it would not be rejected. "Speak, my Emily!" ſaid Valancourt eagerly, "let me hear your voice, let me hear you confirm my fate." She ſpoke not; her cheek was cold, and her ſenſes ſeemed to fail her, but ſhe did not faint. To Valancourt's terrified imagination ſhe appeared to be dying; he called upon her name, roſe to go to the chateau for aſſiſtance, and then, recollecting her ſituation, feared to go, or to leave her for a moment.

After a few minutes, ſhe drew a deep ſigh, and began to revive. The conflict ſhe had ſuffered, between love and the duty ſhe at preſent owed to her father's ſiſter; her repugnance to a clandeſtine marriage, her fear of emerging on the world with embarraſſments, ſuch as might ultimately involve

the object of her affection in misery and repentance;—all this various interest was too powerful for a mind, already enervated by sorrow, and her reason had suffered a transient suspension. But duty and good sense, however hard the conflict, at length triumphed over affection and mournful presentiment; above all, she dreaded to involve Valancourt in obscurity and vain regret, which she saw, or thought she saw, must be the too certain consequence of a marriage in their present circumstances; and she acted, perhaps, with somewhat more than female fortitude, when she resolved to endure a present, rather than provoke a distant misfortune.

With a candour that proved how truly she esteemed and loved him, and which endeared her to him, if possible, more than ever, she told Valancourt all her reasons for rejecting his proposals. Those, which influenced her concerning his future welfare, he instantly refuted, or rather contradicted; but they awakened tender considerations for her, which the phrensy of passion and

despair

deſpair had concealed before, and love, which had but lately prompted him to propoſe a clandeſtine and immediate marriage, now induced him to renounce it. The triumph was almoſt too much for his heart; for Emily's ſake, he endeavoured to ſtifle his grief, but the ſwelling anguiſh would not be reſtrained. "O Emily!" ſaid he, "I muſt leave you—I *muſt* leave you, and I know it is for ever."

Convulſive ſobs again interrupted his words, and they wept together in ſilence, till Emily, recollecting the danger of being diſcovered, and the impropriety of prolonging an interview, which might ſubject her to cenſure, ſummoned all her fortitude to utter a laſt farewell.

"Stay!" ſaid Valancourt, "I conjure you ſtay, for I have much to tell you. The agitation of my mind has hitherto ſuffered me to ſpeak only on the ſubject that occupied it;—I have forborne to mention a doubt of much importance, partly, leſt it ſhould appear as if I told it with an ungenerous

view of alarming you into a compliance with my late propoſal."

Emily, much agitated, did not leave Valancourt, but ſhe led him from the pavilion, and, as they walked upon the terrace, he proceeded as follows:

"This Montoni: I have heard ſome ſtrange hints concerning him. Are you certain he is of Madame Queſnel's family, and that his fortune is what it appears to be?"

"I have no reaſon to doubt either," replied Emily, in a voice of alarm. "Of the firſt, indeed, I cannot doubt, but I have no certain means of judging of the latter, and I entreat you will tell me all you have heard."

"That I certainly will, but it is very imperfect and unſatisfactory information. I gathered it by accident from an Italian, who was ſpeaking to another perſon of this Montoni. They were talking of his marriage; the Italian ſaid, that if he was the perſon he meant, he was not likely to make Madame

Madame Cheron happy. He proceeded to ſpeak of him in general terms of diſlike, and then gave ſome particular hints, concerning his character, that excited my curioſity, and I ventured to aſk him a few queſtions. He was reſerved in his replies, but, after heſitating for ſome time, he owned, that he had underſtood abroad, that Montoni was a man of deſperate fortune and character. He ſaid ſomething of a caſtle of Montoni's, ſituated among the Apennines, and of ſome ſtrange circumſtances, that might be mentioned, as to his former mode of life. I preſſed him to inform me further, but I believe the ſtrong intereſt I felt was viſible in my manner, and alarmed him; for no entreaties could prevail with him to give any explanation of the circumſtances he had alluded to, or to mention any thing further concerning Montoni. I obſerved to him, that, if Montoni was poſſeſſed of a caſtle in the Apennines, it appeared from ſuch a circumſtance, that he was of ſome family, and alſo ſeemed to

contradict the report, that he was a man of entirely broken fortunes. He ſhook his head, and looked as if he could have ſaid a great deal, but made no reply.

"A hope of learning ſomething more ſatisfactory, or more poſitive, detained me in his company a conſiderable time, and I renewed the ſubject repeatedly, but the Italian wrapped himſelf up in reſerve, ſaid—that what he had mentioned he had caught only from a floating report, and that reports frequently aroſe from perſonal malice, and were very little to be depended upon. I forbore to preſs the ſubject farther, ſince it was obvious that he was alarmed for the conſequence of what he had already ſaid, and I was compelled to remain in uncertainty on a point where ſuſpenſe is almoſt intolerable. Think, Emily, what I muſt ſuffer to ſee you depart for a foreign country, committed to the power of a man of ſuch doubtful character as is this Montoni! But I will not alarm you unneceſſarily;—it is poſſible, as the Italian ſaid, at firſt, that

this

this is not the Montoni he alluded to. Yet, Emily, conſider well before you reſolve to commit yourſelf to him. O! I muſt not truſt myſelf to ſpeak—or I ſhall renounce all the motives, which ſo lately influenced me to reſign the hope of your becoming mine immediately."

Valancourt walked upon the terrace with hurried ſteps, while Emily remained leaning on the baluſtrade in deep thought. The information ſhe had juſt received excited, perhaps, more alarm than it could juſtify, and raiſed once more the conflict of contraſted intereſts. She had never liked Montoni. The fire and keenneſs of his eye, its proud exultation, its bold fierceneſs, its ſullen watchfulneſs, as occaſion, and even ſlight occaſion, had called forth the latent ſoul, ſhe had often obſerved with emotion; while from the uſual expreſſion of his countenance ſhe had always ſhrunk. From ſuch obſervations ſhe was the more inclined to believe, that it was this Montoni, of whom the Italian had uttered his ſuſpicious hints.

hints. The thought of being ſolely in his power, in a foreign land, was terrifying to her, but it was not by terror alone that ſhe was urged to an immediate marriage with Valancourt. The tendereſt love had already pleaded his cauſe, but had been unable to overcome her opinion, as to her duty, her diſintereſted conſiderations for Valancourt, and the delicacy which made her revolt from a clandeſtine union. It was not to be expected, that a vague terror would be more powerful, than the united influence of love and grief. But it recalled all their energy, and rendered a ſecond conqueſt neceſſary.

With Valancourt, whoſe imagination was now awake to the ſuggeſtion of every paſſion; whoſe apprehenſions for Emily had acquired ſtrength by the mere mention of them, and became every inſtant more powerful, as his mind brooded over them—with Valancourt no ſecond conqueſt was attainable. He thought he ſaw in the cleareſt light, and love aſſiſted the fear, that this journey to Italy would involve Emily in miſery; he deter-

mined, therefore, to perſevere in oppoſing it, and in conjuring her to beſtow upon him the title of her lawful protector.

"Emily!" ſaid he, with ſolemn earneſtneſs, "this is no time for ſcrupulous diſtinctions, for weighing the dubious and comparatively trifling circumſtances, that may affect our future comfort. I now ſee, much more clearly than before, the train of ſerious dangers you are going to encounter with a man of Montoni's character. Thoſe dark hints of the Italian ſpoke much, but not more than the idea I have of Montoni's diſpoſition, as exhibited even in his countenance. I think I ſee at this moment all that could have been hinted, written there. He is the Italian whom I fear, and I conjure you for your own ſake, as well as for mine, to prevent the evils I ſhudder to foreſee. O Emily! let my tenderneſs, my arms withhold you from them—give me the right to defend you!"

Emily only ſighed, while Valancourt proceeded to remonſtrate and to entreat with all

all the energy that love and apprehenſion could inſpire. But, as his imagination magnified to her the poſſible evils ſhe was going to meet, the miſts of her own fancy began to diſſipate, and allowed her to diſtinguiſh the exaggerated images which impoſed on his reaſon. She conſidered, that there was no proof of Montoni being the perſon, whom the ſtranger had meant; that, even if he was ſo, the Italian had noticed his character and broken fortunes merely from report; and that, though the countenance of Montoni ſeemed to give probability to a part of the rumour, it was not by ſuch circumſtances that an implicit belief of it could be juſtified. Theſe conſiderations would probably not have ariſen ſo diſtinctly to her mind, at this time, had not the terrors of Valancourt preſented to her ſuch obvious exaggerations of her danger, as incited her to diſtruſt the fallacies of paſſion. But, while ſhe endeavoured in the gentleſt manner to convince him of his error, ſhe plunged him into a new one.

His

His voice and countenance changed to an expreſſion of dark deſpair. "Emily!" ſaid he, "this, this moment is the bittereſt that is yet come to me. You do not—cannot love me!—It would be impoſſible for you to reaſon thus coolly, thus deliberately, if you did. I, *I* am torn with anguiſh at the proſpect of our ſeparation, and of the evils that may await you in conſequence of it; I would encounter any hazards to prevent it—to ſave you. No! Emily, no!—you cannot love me."

"We have now little time to waſte in exclamation, or aſſertion," ſaid Emily, endeavouring to conceal her emotion: "if you are yet to learn how dear you are, and ever muſt be, to my heart, no aſſurances of mine can give you conviction."

The laſt words faltered on her lips, and her tears flowed faſt. Thoſe words and tears brought, once more, and with inſtantaneous force, conviction of her love to Valancourt. He could only exclaim, "Emily! Emily!" and weep over the hand he preſſed

preſſed to his lips; but ſhe, after ſome moments, again rouſed herſelf from the indulgence of ſorrow, and ſaid, "I muſt leave you; it is late, and my abſence from the chateau may be diſcovered. Think of me—love me—when I am far away; the belief of this will be my comfort!"

"Think of you!—love you!" exclaimed Valancourt.

"Try to moderate these tranſports," ſaid Emily, "for my ſake, try."

"For your ſake!"

"Yes, for my ſake," replied Emily, in a tremulous voice, "I cannot leave you thus!"

"Then do not leave me!" ſaid Valancourt, with quickneſs. "Why ſhould we part, or part for longer than till to-morrow?"

"I am, indeed I am, unequal to theſe moments," replied Emily; "you tear my heart, but I never can conſent to this haſty, imprudent propoſal!"

"If we could command our time, my Emily,

Emily, it ſhould not be thus haſty; we muſt ſubmit to circumſtances."

"We muſt, indeed! I have already told you all my heart—my ſpirits are gone. You allowed the force of my objections, till your tenderneſs called up vague terrors, which have given us both unneceſſary anguiſh. Spare me! do not oblige me to repeat the reaſons I have already urged."

"Spare you!" cr. I Valancourt, "I am a wretch—a very wretch, that have felt only for myſelf!—I! who ought to have ſhewn the fortitude of man, who ought to have ſupported you, I! have increaſed your ſufferings by the conduct of a child! Forgive me! Emily! think of the diſtraction of my mind now that I am about to part with all that is dear to me—and forgive me! When you are gone, I ſhall recollect with bitter remorſe what I have made you ſuffer, and ſhall wiſh in vain that I could ſee you, if only for a moment, that I might ſooth your grief."

Tears again interrupted his voice, and Emily wept with him. "I will ſhew myſelf

ſelf more worthy of your love," ſaid Valancourt, at length; "I will not prolong theſe moments. My Emily—my own Emily! never forget me! God knows when we ſhall meet again! I reſign you to his care.——O God!—O God!—protect and bleſs her!"

He preſſed her hand to his heart. Emily ſunk almoſt lifeleſs on his boſom; and neither wept nor ſpoke. Valancourt, now commanding his own diſtreſs, tried to comfort and re-aſſure her, but ſhe appeared totally unaffected by what he ſaid, and a ſigh, which ſhe uttered, now and then, was all that proved ſhe had not fainted.

He ſupported her ſlowly towards the chateau, weeping and ſpeaking to her; but ſhe anſwered only in ſighs, till, having reached the gate that terminated the avenue, ſhe ſeemed to have recovered her conſciouſneſs, and, looking round, perceived how near they were to the chateau. "We muſt part here," ſaid ſhe, ſtopping, "Why prolong theſe moments? Teach me the fortitude I have forgot."

Valan-

Valancourt ſtruggled to aſſume a compoſed air. "Farewell, my love!" ſaid he, in a voice of ſolemn tenderneſs—"truſt me we ſhall meet again—meet for each other—meet to part no more!" His voice faltered, but, recovering it, he proceeded in a firmer tone. "You know not what I ſhall ſuffer, till I hear from you; I ſhall omit no opportunity of conveying to you my letters, yet I tremble to think how few may occur. And truſt me, love, for your dear ſake, I will try to bear this abſence with fortitude. O how little I have ſhewn to-night!"

"Farewell!" ſaid Emily faintly. "When you are gone, I ſhall think of many things I would have ſaid to you." "And I of many—many!" ſaid Valancourt; "I never left you yet, that I did not immediately remember ſome queſtion, or ſome entreaty, or ſome circumſtance, concerning my love, that I earneſtly wiſhed to mention, and felt wretched becauſe I could not. O Emily! this countenance, on which I now gaze—will, in a moment, be gone from my eyes, and not all